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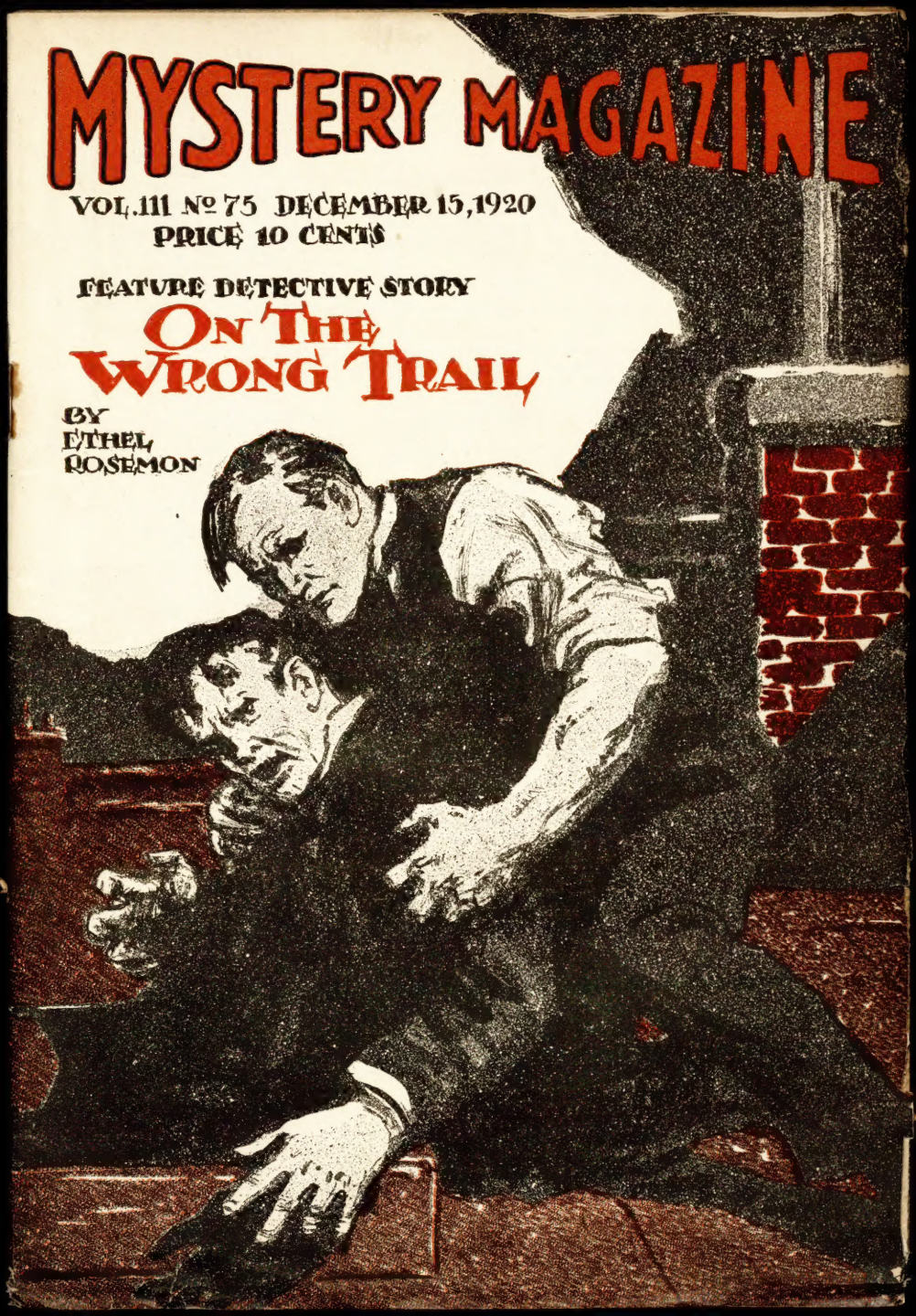
FEATURE DETECTIVE STORY

ON THE WRONG TRAIL

BY
ETHEL ROSEMON



Read "The Spirit Witness," by Charles F. Oursler, in Our Next Issue.

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ON THE WRONG TRAIL

A DETECTIVE STORY

By ETHEL ROSEMON

CHAPTER ONE

"I WANT you to watch my niece."

It was characteristic of Robert Ashton that he came to the point at once. The Chief leaned back in his chair, and smiled his satisfaction. Here was a client it would be a pleasure to serve. Most of them, especially the older ones, started with the circumstances surrounding their birth, repeated the clever sayings attributed to them in childhood, recounted their triumphs on the football field while at college, reviewed the days of courtships, their marital troubles, and then, when they had wasted two or three hours of valuable time, it took all the detective's ingenuity to learn what they desired of headquarters. This man the Chief knew would keep to the main road without any temptation to wander into bypaths.

"If you will wait a moment, Mr. Ashton, I will detail a man to your case at once," he said. "If he is present at this interview it will save your repeating the circumstances for his benefit."

A few moments later the Chief introduced young Hackett, one of his protégés.

"A week ago my only brother died at Syracuse," Mr. Ashton resumed as soon as he had acknowledged the introduction. "In his will he left his entire fortune, amounting to about a half million dollars, to his only child, a daughter, Mary. The will provides that in event of her dying childless or marrying before she is nineteen, the money reverts to her mother's brother, Edwin Brown. The latter always exerted a

strange influence over my brother Will. I have every reason to believe that he tried to persuade him to disinherit Mary. Failing in this, he carried tales of her infatuation for a worthless young man of Syracuse, a descendant of a wealthy family whose several questionable escapades have cut him off entirely from his relatives. If Mary knows this Roger Hastings at all, I am sure the acquaintanceship is slight. It was to prevent this possible marriage that my brother added the second clause to his will.

"I was appointed guardian to my niece, but being on the Coast at the time of my brother's death I was unable to take charge of her affairs as quickly as I desired. Her mother's brother, Brown, was present, and knowing the character of the man, I have no doubt he began to lay his plans for getting control of Mary's fortune the moment the physician pronounced my brother dead. He is now to all appearances carrying out Will's last request that my niece be taken to my home in New York as soon as possible after the funeral."

Mr. Ashton laid before the chief a telegram which he had received about fifteen minutes before entering the office at headquarters.

"Mary Ashton will leave Syracuse on the four o'clock express this afternoon accompanied by Edwin Brown and Roger Hastings. Advise caution. A FRIEND."

"My idea is to have Mr. Hackett take the next train North, meet the express from Syracuse, and keep watch upon my niece until she arrives at my house."

"He is at your service, Mr. Ashton," the Chief replied. "I am sure he will be able to carry out your mission to your entire satisfaction."

"The next train north leaves the Grand Central in twenty minutes," Mr. Ashton remarked as he rose to go. "There is just time to make it."

On the way to the station Ashton gave Hackett a detailed description of the trio.

"The most noticeable feature about my niece is the blackness of her eyelashes, which is very uncommon in persons of her blonde complexion. The contrast rivets one's attention upon her eyes to the exclusion of everything else. The effect I am told is one which many women of the stage strive to obtain by means of eye cosmetics.

"I shall probably require your services even after my niece has arrived at my home," he concluded as Hackett sprang aboard the train which was just pulling out.

CHAPTER TWO

"IF you get off at Albany you will have just half an hour to wait for the train from Syracuse," the conductor told Hackett.

The detective wished he could make connections with the train at some station the other side of Albany. He realized the ease with which Mary Ashton's companions could become lost in the crowded depot if their plans were to board another train not headed for New York. At Albany he learned that the train from Syracuse was half an hour late. A hasty meal in a lunchroom across the way from the station took up twenty minutes of the time. The remaining forty he spent walking around the waiting room and speculating upon which of the young women travelers had most in common with the young heiress whom he had been commissioned to protect. He was not at all adverse to his task. Indeed, it promised many more thrills than running down a bank robber, or hunting for an army deserter. He liked eyes such as Mr. Ashton had described, blue with a deep fringe of black that tantalized you when they were open, and tantalized you just twice as much when they were closed. He had seen an actress with that kind of eyes way back in the old days when he had saved up for two months to get a seat in the topmost gallery. Nothing Mr. Ashton could have said would have fired his imagination more.

At last the Syracuse train was announced and the detective boarded the smoker. Possibly the men he sought would be in that coach. It was a good starting point for a search of the remaining cars. His hasty glance around revealed no one of the type described by Ashton, but then some of the men had their faces buried in newspapers and magazines, while others, their caps pulled down over their eyes, were dozing in their seats. He passed from car to car alert for dark-fringed eyes. No one at all resembling Mary Ashton was aboard. What if, as he feared, the trio had left the train at Albany? There was only one chance in a thousand that any trace could be found of them. He entered the last Pullman with little interest, so sure was he that the search was in vain. As he passed a chair the back of which was turned toward him some one stooped over to pick up a magazine that had just fallen. Instinctively his hand went out for the book, and as it closed upon it he looked into a pair of dark-fringed eyes that were on a level with his own.

"Thank you," the owner of the eyes murmured, as he placed the magazine in her hand.

"Glad to be of service, I am sure, Miss Ashton," he replied, the name escaping his lips almost unconsciously.

The girl started, and a faint blush mounted her cheeks.

"I don't remember——," she began. "Did I meet you in Syracuse? You must excuse me, for I have an extremely poor memory for faces."

"Your memory is not at fault this time," Hackett laughed. "To tell the truth you have never before laid eyes upon me."

"Then how did you know my name?" the girl asked with what seemed to the detective an expression of great relief.

"Your uncle, Robert Ashton, sent me to meet you," Hackett explained, handing her his card.

"But didn't my uncle know that I was escorted by my mother's brother, and a mutual acquaintance?" Miss Ashton asked in surprise.

"He did," the detective answered, "but he wished to be doubly sure of your safety. Where are your companions?"

"They went into the smoker shortly before we left Albany," the girl replied with apparent desire to resume the reading of her magazine.

"I have a seat in this car, and will be on hand if you need me," Hackett told her, as he raised his hat and passed on.

A few moments later he noticed that the adjoining seats were occupied by two men who answered the general description of Brown and Hastings. The girl was in earnest conversation with the two, and from the glances she frequently cast in his direction he knew that she was relating their recent encounter. It was a foolish thing for her to do, he thought, but then since he had made no reference to her companions as the cause of her uncle's anxiety, it might be a natural procedure.

At Yonkers some engine trouble which had begun some miles up the line demanded immediate attention.

"The conductor says we will be stalled here at least a half-hour," Brown announced. "I'll get off and attend to that matter we were discussing," he concluded with a significant glance at his companion.

"You are wise not to delay," the latter returned. "While you are gone, Mary and I will take a stroll on the platform. These long rides make one feel like stretching."

The girl rose eagerly to her feet. Hackett was surprised to see that she was much taller than she appeared when seated, much taller than her uncle's description had given him to expect.

The detective gave a hasty glance at his timetable. There was no train due from New York at this time. The girl would be safe upon the platform where many of the passengers were already walking up and down. Brown was most likely going upon an errand that would have some important bearing upon coming events. He would follow and see what he could learn.

When he left the platform, Brown was already a hastening speck in the distance. He had a good start, but Hackett held a record for walking and knew that he could easily overtake him. Besides it suited his plan admirably to be a fair distance behind him.

Suddenly Brown turned down a street away from the business section. Hackett wondered at his intention, but followed on. A second later there was a sound of hurrying footsteps in back of him. The detective turned quickly. As he did so he felt a stinging blow on his head. The next instant he fell in a crumpled heap at the side of the walk.

CHAPTER THREE

WHEN Hackett regained consciousness, he found himself occupying a small hospital room.

"How did I get here?" he questioned the nurse in attendance.

"Two men found you lying along the roadside," she replied. "They were walking up from the station when they heard a groan. At first they thought it was one of their friends playing a trick on them, and were about to pass on their way, when the groan was repeated. They searched around and found you lying hidden in the bushes, where, whoever struck you, had evidently dragged you. The police are now busy trying to find some trace of your assailant. Have you any idea who it was?"

The detective shook his head.

"Perhaps it was the little roll that I had in my pocket," he suggested. "Would you mind inquiring if I had a thousand dollars in my clothes when I was brought in?"

As the nurse left the room on her errand, an amused smile lit up the patient's face.

"If I had a thousand dollars all at one shot, I'd buy the hospital and marry the nurse," he murmured.

"Sixty-five dollars and thirteen cents," the nurse reported a few moments later.

"The Chief's," Hackett commented.

"Beg pardon," the nurse said, wondering if her patient's mind had become affected by the blow.

"I said they're cheap to leave a fellow so low," he smiled. "And now I want to go home if you have no objections to returning my civilian clothes."

"Not until the doctor gives the order," his attendant announced.

"Now what do you think of that?" Hackett asked. "A nice healthy specimen of a man I am. Laid up here in bed like a baby just because some one gives me a wallop on the head. Well, I might as well take things easy while I'm here. Call me when his Highness arrives."

"Better visit us a couple of days longer," the doctor advised, when he made his rounds toward evening.

"Delighted; later in the season. This is my busy time. Want to catch the next train to New York. How about it?"

"Well, I guess it would do you less harm than staying here and worrying."

"Thanks, Doc. I'll say you have my case doped out just about right." Hackett laughed.

When he left Yonkers he had every intention

of making a late call upon his client. At the Grand Central, though, things began to get a little confused. Porters, trains and passengers would not heed his request to keep in their separate paths. Impatiently he hailed a taxi and gave the name of his hotel.

"You failed to make connections with the party?" Ashton asked Hackett when he called the next morning.

"I made connections all right," the detective answered, "but in my eagerness to grasp all the details at once I followed Brown up a dark road, making myself a wonderful target for Hastings, who was evidently following the two of us. Have you had any word from your niece?"

"Brown called yesterday morning," Ashton replied. "'Well, how do you think Mary is looking?' was his first question. 'I haven't seen her,' I answered. 'Didn't you bring her to New York?'

"'As far as the Grand Central,' he replied. 'A young friend of Mary's, a fellow by the name of Hastings, accompanied us from Syracuse. When your chauffeur met us, I mentioned a business appointment I had at the Manhattan Hotel, and Hastings offered to accompany Mary as far as your door. That's the last I saw of either of them. Do you mean to say that you have had no word from your niece?'

"'None whatever,' I answered. 'Furthermore my chauffeur did not meet that train.'

"'The man said he was sent by you,' Brown insisted.

"I then summoned John and Brown admitted that he bore no resemblance to the one who had met them the previous evening.

"'It is indeed singular,' Brown mused. 'I did not think Mary would do such a thing after I had her promise.'

"'What thing?' I questioned.

"'Probably you do not know that she has been infatuated with Hastings for some time. It was her father's express wish that she should not marry him, and therefore, of course, it was my wish. Coming down in the train yesterday we discussed the matter seriously, while Hastings was in the smoker, and she gave me her word that she would not even pledge herself to him until she had given you ample opportunity to investigate his character, and that she would be guided entirely by your decision in the matter.'"

"And you believe Brown was speaking the truth?" Hackett inquired.

"It was difficult to doubt him," Ashton replied. "He seemed as much wrought up over the matter as I was myself. He voluntarily referred to the clause in my brother's will, by which the property reverts to him in just such an event as he feared had occurred, and expressed his intention of not touching a penny of it.

"'This fellow Hastings, while a charming enough fellow, is a ne'er-do-well, and there is small chance of his being able to make a living for Mary,' he remarked. 'I will keep her fortune intact for her so she will have it when she leaves him, an event which is sure to take place.'

"But, Mr. Ashton," Hackett reminded him, "do you think if he were as honest in his dealings as you say he appeared, he would have led me into that trap?"

"I confess if I had known of that at the time I would have been inclined to place less faith in his sincerity. However, what he says is probably true, for late last evening I received this note from my niece."

He placed in the detective's hand a few lines evidently written under great stress.

"DEAR UNCLE ROBERT:

"I hope you will not be grieved at what I have done. I have decided to leave tonight for Florida, where I will be married to Roger Hastings. Ask Uncle Edwin to forgive me for breaking my promise to him. I will write again later.

"MARY."

"You are positive that this is your niece's handwriting?" Hackett asked, as he examined the note.

"Yes, I have carefully compared it with one she wrote me the day after her father's death. With the exception of the variation due to haste, the formation of the letters seems the same."

"I suppose Miss Ashton was made acquainted with the terms of your brother's will, and realized that by this hasty marriage she was sacrificing a fortune," the detective commented.

"Yes, I have every reason to believe that she knew the consequences attendant upon her action. It is strange, though, that Hastings, who from what I can learn is simply a fortune hunter, should marry a penniless girl."

"That is easily explained. Brown evidently made arrangements to give him a generous share of the half million. Then, too, from the little I saw of him on the train I would say that he was really attracted to your niece. And you must remember that the 'till death doth us part' has become a very elastic clause in this day."

"In any case, my niece has taken her affairs completely out of your hands," Mr. Ashton concluded.

Hackett could plainly see that it was fear for Mary Ashton's future happiness and not her loss of a fortune that was worrying his client.

CHAPTER FOUR

"WELL, young man, you certainly can't be held accountable for not continuing the trail when you were lying unconscious by the Yonkers roadside," the Chief tried to comfort the young detective a few hours later. "There are

some things you know that even our will can't overcome, and a blow on the back of the head is one of them. I understand how you feel, for I went through the same thing myself over the first case I lost. The value you put upon yourself as a detective isn't anything you would dare hand a self-respecting waiter. You're sure you have chosen the wrong profession, and you wonder how you came to be here at all. That feeling will pass away, my boy, as soon as you become interested in your next case. And I have one waiting for you. too. What do you say to a trip South with the discovery of the whereabouts of Slickey Barnstein, King of the Bond Mystery, as your goal. His Nobbs, to my way of thinking, is at present enjoying the soft Southern breezes, I can't say whether at Palm Beach or Miami. I figure that's just about what I'd do if I faced the prospect of occupying a suite at the expense of the State, and after all human nature is pretty much the same the world over."

"I am under the impression that most people think he is in the West," Hackett commented.

"So they do, so they do," the Chief rejoined, "but that still remains to be seen."

"This is just his method of giving me a change of scene," the detective decided as he made ready for the trip.

The Southern season was at its height, and Hackett agreed with his Chief that if one is going to be a crook, one might as well be a first class one. He would liked to have given himself up to the soothing laziness that was in the air, and that seemed in the course of a few days to cast its spell over the most energetic Northerners. Miami was an ideal place to loaf, to forget that one had gone in search of black-fringed eyes and landed in a heap by the roadside. The detective considered it ideal, but evidently Slickey did not, for a couple of weeks' search among the idlers brought no trace of the masterhand in the bond mystery. Palm Beach was the other alternative the Chief had mentioned. It sounded attractive, and Hackett decided to move his camp.

He was seated upon the beach one morning watching the bathers when the sound of a familiar voice caused him to turn his head quickly. The parasol carried by a young woman who was passing was hastily lowered over her face, but not before Hackett had caught a glimpse of her eyes. He knew by the lowering of the parasol that she had recognized his profile which had been turned towards her, but she gave no other sign of recognition. He saw her make a warning gesture to her companion, who was none other than Roger Hastings, and both quickened their steps. With the green parasol as his guide, he kept the couple in sight for the remainder of the morning. He was determined to find out the hotel at which they were stopping, and they seemed just as determined that he should not. Toward noon they passed two young men who raised their hats while one exchanged greetings with Hastings and his companion.

"Who's the young beauty with the come-hither eyes?" the second inquired as they passed Hackett.

"They're staying at our hotel," the first answered. "I don't know their names. When I was waiting for you to come down this morning the lady left that green parasol of hers on the porch. I rescued it, returned it, and now I have the privilege of a nodding acquaintance."

"You always were a lucky dog," the other laughed. "No fair damsel ever forgets anything when I'm within hailing distance, or, if she does, my eyes are closed, and I never see it."

The men were young. They were evidently down on a pleasure trip, consequently the noon hour would spell meal time for them. Hackett quickly transferred his attentions from Hastings and Mary to the men who were staying at the same hotel. It was a sure guess that they would return there within a very short time. When they did he found it was one of the best hotels of which the resort boasted. Evidently Edwin Brown had been prompt in the payment of his debts.

With the disguise of gray streaks at his temples, a small mustache and heavy rimmed glasses, Hackett later in the day registered at the hotel under the name of Thornton Aubrey. It suited his fancy to attach this name to a man who could afford to spend his days at a winter resort. His disguise was a good one. The proof came when Mary passed him the next morning without the heightened color, the flickering of the eyelashes that betokened recognition. Within a short time he learned that the Hastings room was on the top floor, and under plea of requiring the utmost quiet, he secured the next reservation upon that floor.

Mr. Ashton had remarked that Mary had taken her case out of their hands, but for some reason or other the detective still regarded it as the important work of the hour. Before it Slickey and the Bond Mystery slid into oblivion.

He had been at the hotel a week when he was awakened at two o'clock one morning by the noise of people running in the hall, and by excited cries of "Fire." He jumped out of bed, threw on his bath rode, and opened the door leading into the hall. As he did a cloud of smoke rushed into the room. He closed the door and made for the window. In the "L" formed by the wing of the hotel tongues of smoke were licking the side of the building and rapidly making their way upward from the floor below. Men and women, completely shut off from escape, were crawling out upon the window ledges. Their cries for help were answered by huddled groups on the ground below, who called to them not to jump, and encouraged them with word that the firemen were on their way.

In a room in the L Hackett could distinguish the figures of Hastings and Mary Ashton. They made several attempts to go out into the hall, but each time were driven back by the dense clouds of smoke. Finally Mary gained the window ledge, and looked down, as if measuring the distance.

"Don't jump," Hackett called to her across the space. "The men will be to you in a second."

Even as he spoke two firemen gained the roof just above her head. One threw himself flat, a little way back, and grasped the legs of the other, who leaned over the ledge, with his arms in reaching distance of the girl in the window. As she was about to grasp them, she was hurled into the room, and Hastings appeared in her place. A murmur of disgust went up from the watchers as the man was drawn to safety upon the roof.

"There's a woman in the room. Get her," some one called.

Again the fireman swung himself over the ledge.

"Hurry, Mary, hurry," Hackett cried, for the flames were scorching the window sill of her room.

At the sound of her name, the girl staggered to the window, and leaned out, as if to answer. From this position the fireman could just reach her arms. As he dragged her up beside him, the flames scorched her feet and the hem of her night robe. As soon as those who were in the burning part of the building had been carried to safety, the rescuers turned their attention to some people who were cut off from escape by the dense smoke that filled the hallways.

Automobiles from the neighboring hotels were parked below, waiting to take the fire victims to shelter. Hackett managed to get into the car in which Mary and Hastings were already seated. So intent was the latter upon his own escape that he paid little attention to his companion.

"Shall I drive you directly to a doctor's?" the owner of the car asked as Mary winced with pain.

"Never mind, thank you, I'll——"

The sentence ended in a gasp, as the girl fell back unconscious.

CHAPTER FIVE

AS the doctor completed the dressing of Mary's burned foot, Detective Hackett looked down for the first time at the face of the girl he was supporting against his shoulder. His start of astonishment aroused her. As she looked into his eyes, recognition dawned in her own. With it came a silent plea for mercy.

"I'm afraid you won't be able to use that foot for several days," the doctor's voice came to them. "The burn is deeper than you realize."

On the way back to the hotel, at which most of the guests had found temporary quarters, Hastings seemed to suddenly awaken to a sense of his responsibility. He took charge of the girl by his side, but never lifted his eyes to the faces of the other occupants of the car. In this way Hackett escaped discovery.

"I will send for you soon and explain," the girl whispered under guise of thanking the detective for his aid.

Early the next afternoon the expected summons came.

"Mr. Hastings has gone out on some business, and this may be the only opportunity I shall have of seeing you alone," she began hurriedly as soon as the door closed upon the attendant who had shown him to her room. "I could tell by your eyes last night that you know I am not Mary Ashton. Have you seen her? Is she safe?"

"I have had no word of her," Hackett replied. "In fact I did not know until the second before you regained consciousness that you were not Mary."

"What led you to the discovery?" she asked.

"Your eyelashes. They were not black last night."

"They never are—at that time of the night or rather morning," she told him. "Mary Ashton and I are not very different in appearance with the exception of our eyes. She, as you are aware, has naturally very black lashes. I have, too, with the aid of that little box," she continued, indicating an oblong box of dark cardboard marked "Mascaro," which was lying on the top of her dressing-table. "It was this resemblance which first attracted Roger Hastings to me. I was at that time employed as a manicure in the barber shop which he patronized. One day I looked up from my table to see the eyes of a strange young man fastened upon me. Although the table next to mine was vacant, he waited until I had finished with my customer, and then slid into the chair. He began with the usual pleasantries which men employ at such times. However, it did not end there. He began to invite me to dinner and to the theatre, and as I liked him personally, I accepted. Before I realized it, I had become infatuated with him. I had been living alone in Syracuse for two years, and was thoroughly sick of it. When he proposed that I go to New York to live with him, I accepted. I did not delude myself with the idea that he bore any real love for me. I was content to be with him.

"It was not until we were on the train to New York that he told me I was to impersonate the niece of his friend, Edwin Brown, who was traveling with us.

"'You are a dead ringer for her, all except your eyes, and you can easily remedy that by fixing up your lashes,' he said. 'I expect to meet some men with whom Brown and I hope to put over a business deal that will make us comfortable for the rest of our lives and it will be

better all around if they get the impression that you are his niece, Mary Ashton. Better fix up the eyes now in case any of them happen to have seen her.'

"You were the first one who mistook me for Miss Ashton. I did not know anything of the scheme in which they were involving me until they returned, after leaving you senseless at the side of the road. They then pointed out that since I had impersonated Mary Ashton I was legally more guilty than they, and that any attempt to expose them would bring punishment upon myself. There seemed to be no other course but to continue with them. Brown left us in New York, and Roger and I came directly down here. Before we reached the city I knew how thoroughly dishonest and unscrupulous he was, but I did not see him in his true colors until the fire last night. I shall stay with him until Mary Ashton is found. It may be that I shall be able to get some clue to her whereabouts."

"You have none at present?" the detective inquired.

"I know that she is still in Syracuse or rather was when we left for New York," the girl answered. "She is being detained there by some one who is in league with Brown and Hastings. I think the plan is to divide the fortune which she forfeited to Brown, upon her supposed marriage to Roger, and take up their residence in England."

"Does Hastings know that I am at Palm Beach?" Hackett inquired.

"He knew that you were here the day I recognized you, but having had no trace of you since, he is of the opinion that you have returned to New York. He said at the time that you were probably down here upon some other case, as Mr. Ashton's need for your services ended with his niece's marriage."

"I am sure you will be able to help me find Miss Ashton." the detective said. "Stay with Hastings, keep a close watch on his mail, and let me know if you learn anything of importance. Also keep me informed of changes of address. Since Hastings is working in league with at least two other people, we can best gain our ends by not letting him know that he is under suspicion."

CHAPTER SIX

"WELL, did you find Slickey?" the Chief inquired when Hackett reported at headquarters.

"Slickey?" the detective repeated wonderingly. "Slickey? Oh, no, not a sign of him." And the Chief smiled at the flush of embarrassment that mounted to the young man's forehead.

"Well, what's on your mind?" he encouraged.

"I have a clue to the whereabouts of Mary Ashton," Hackett hastened to explain, "and the girl we've been taking for the niece all along isn't the niece, but a friend of Hastings, a young woman who is so like Miss Ashton that, with a clever make-up device, they can scarcely be told apart."

Then he gave in detail his findings during his stay at Palm Beach.

"Are you sure you can trust this girl, this——"

"Ruth Linden," the detective supplied. "As far as I am any judge of human nature, she is thoroughly disgusted with Hastings, and anxious to make some reparation for the wrong which she has unconsciously done Miss Ashton. I believe she will be a great help in working out the case."

"I hope so," the Chief commented, "for just an hour ago I learned that Hastings is mixed up in this bond mystery. One of the leaders tried to sell some bonds to a house in Buffalo a few days ago. When he learned that he was being watched, he disappeared. The only clue we have is a telegram in code sent to Palm Beach, and received by Hastings. The latter left for the North immediately on the receipt of the message, but in some unknown way managed to slip through the fingers of the detectives we had posted on the way. Your big case promises to be a double-header. Feel equal to it?"

Hackett's smile reflected the confidence of his Chief.

"Wait in town a day or so," the Chief advised. "If this girl is on the level, you'll hear from her. If she isn't, it will be well to be prepared to have her working against you."

But for some reason or other Hackett was banking on the girl. He realized that a knowledge of character is one of the main assets of a successful detective, and now that affairs had taken a favorable turn, he began to think that perhaps he had not chosen the wrong profession after all. Sure enough, late that evening the voice he expected on the phone announced that its owner was in town, and would like to see him immediately. She named a restaurant convenient to the Pennsylvania Station as their meeting place.

"Is Hastings with you?" was Hackett's first question, after he and the girl had exchanged greetings.

"He disappeared at Charleston," she told him. "We could not get a drawing room, so he had the upper berth, I the lower. Just before we reached Charleston I fell into a doze from which I was awakened by hearing him climb down from his berth. I drew the curtains, and looked out. He was fully dressed, and carried a traveling bag. I was going to call to him, but realizing that if he were trying to run away from any one such a procedure would only implicate me, I

kept quiet. Through an opening in the curtain I kept watch on the platform, and in a few seconds I saw him hurry by, his coat collar turned up, his hat pulled well down upon his head. He must have discovered that some one was on his trail, or he would not have left me that way."

"Have you reason to believe that he is in any way connected with a bond theft?" the detective asked.

"None whatever," the girl replied. "He received several code telegrams, but these he always explained were in reference to some Wall Street stocks."

"Have you any of these telegrams?" Hackett inquired.

"No, he always destroyed them the moment he read them."

"And what are your plans now?" the detective questioned. "Do you expect to return to Syracuse?"

"Only to help find Miss Ashton. I am going to work on this case, and when it is over, I shall try to find employment in one of the detective bureaus. There are many men like Hastings in the world, and I think they can most surely be brought to justice through a woman."

"You have the right idea," Hackett told her, "and I think the Chief will be only too glad to give you a chance as a reward for your help in locating Miss Ashton."

"It will be all right for me to go to Syracuse with you?"

"Better if you meet me there. At present it will be wise if an opportunity arises for you to give Hastings the impression that you are still loyal to him. If he or any of his companions should run into us together, he would surmise the true state of affairs."

It was arranged, then, that she should leave for Syracuse at once, he would follow the next morning, and they would meet that evening to map out their campaign.

CHAPTER SEVEN

"LET us walk along the unfrequented streets," Ruth suggested when she met Hackett at ten o'clock the next evening. "You remember I lived here for two years, and many of the people who know Hastings know me, too. I can't help feeling that he will return here sooner or later, so we want to observe every precaution."

They walked for an hour, and discussed the possible hiding place of Mary Ashton.

"You see we have nothing whatever to work upon except the fact that she is in Syracuse," Hackett concluded finally.

"Even that is not positive," the girl added. "She may have been moved from here since we left the city."

"Well, I guess we can't find a clue tonight, so we might as well get a good rest and see if our minds are working better in the morning. I wonder if we stand on this corner long enough we will be able to hail a stray taxi."

"Taxis don't look for fares in this neighborhood," she told him. "Let's stand under this light, so there'll be no danger of our being missed."

With that she stepped into the full glare of the street lamp. As she did so there was a rush of feet behind them. Before Hackett could turn, he was thrown to the ground, while the girl was dragged to a cab waiting in the shadow of a building on the side street and hastily pushed inside. With the aid of the lamp post Hackett struggled to his feet, just as the cab swung around, and sped down the street.

There was no possible way of tracing the girl. No one was in sight when the attack occurred, and Hackett had not been able to catch a glimpse of his assailants' faces. He spent the next day between the station and the hotel, in hope that the new developments might bring Brown or Hastings to the city, or that Ruth might find some way of getting word to him.

In the evening he set out for the deserted streets, on the chance that the kidnappers of the previous night might be looking for a new victim. This time he had his gun ready for use at the slightest alarm. As he walked slowly, alert for every sound, every movement, he noticed a woman stumbling along before him, keeping well in the shadow of the building as if fearing detection. He hastened his steps with the idea of getting a look at her face. As he did so, the woman turned her head to one side, gave a little cry of fear, and fell in a heap at the side of the building. Hackett reached her side and bent over her. As he turned her face toward the light, he gave an exclamation of dismay, and lifting the girl in his arms, started to run back toward the city.

"Oh, yes, she'll pull through," the doctor told him an hour later. "It's a case of nervous exhaustion brought on by fear, confinement and starvation. A few weeks of fresh air, rest, and nourishing food, and you won't know her."

Up to this moment the girl had not opened her eyes, though her breathing was easy, and a faint color was beginning to suffuse her cheeks. The detective sat at her bedside watching every movement. He blamed himself for losing sight of her personal safety in the desire for her help in his case. Finally the lids raised slowly, and she looked at him but with no sign of recognition.

"Feeling better, Ruth?" he asked. but his question only brought a look of terror into her eyes.

"Don't be afraid," he said soothingly, and then it suddenly dawned upon him that perhaps the suffering she had undergone, suffering that could

so quickly waste her face and form, might have had some effect upon her mind.

"Don't you remember me, Ruth?" he questioned.

"I—I never saw you before," she answered feebly. "And my name's not Ruth."

"Of course it is. Don't you remember?" he recalled patiently. "We were standing on the corner waiting for a taxicab when those men came up behind us, knocked me down, and carried you away with them."

The wonder in her eyes increased.

"That never happened to me," she insisted, "and I know I never saw you before. I have been shut up in a house for days and days, and my name's Mary Ashton."

"Mary Ashton?" he repeated in amazement. "Why, I'm the detective your uncle employed to find you. How did you manage to escape?"

Then she told him of her confinement, of her many unsuccessful attempts to escape, and of her final bribing of the old woman who served her scant meals.

"Do you think you could find the house?" Hackett inquired eagerly.

"I was blindfolded when I was taken there," she answered, "and it was night when I got away, but I know I would recognize the lot at the side of the house, for I watched it for hours from the tiny barred window of my room, in the hope that I might some time be able to attract the attention of the men who were working on the foundation of a new factory near by."

"Then, as soon as you are feeling equal to it, we will take a cab and ride through the city until you identify the place," the detective told her. "A girl who was forced to impersonate you was captured the other night by men evidently sent out to look for you, and she is, without a doubt, held prisoner in your stead. As she has been trying to find you, I am sure she will not disclose the mistake that has been made."

When Miss Ashton heard the story of Ruth Linden, she expressed her eagerness to start out at once to identify the place.

"Very well," Hackett assured her, "if you are feeling stronger in the morning, we will plan an all day ride around the town. And now get all the rest you can, in preparation for it."

As soon as he had left her the detective made his way to the office of a building trades paper, to gather what information he could as to the location of the new factories now in process of construction near where the girl was held a prisoner.

CHAPTER EIGHT

"THERE, that's it, I am sure," Mary Ashton exclaimed when they passed the fifth place on Hackett's list, about noon the next day. "If I could only get a glimpse of the face of that workingman who is sitting there eating his lunch, I would be positive. Can't you ask him something to attract his attention?"

"And we might also attract the attention of some one in the house at the same time," her companion warned. "It will be better to pass by here again at the end of the noon hour, and then you will probably be able to recognize him."

Later Mary identified the place positively.

"If we ride up that side street I am sure we will be able to see the tiny barred window on the top floor of which my room was located," she said. "Yes, there it is," she exclaimed, a few moments later. "Look, isn't that a woman just turning away from the window."

"Please, Miss Ashton, keep your veil down," Hackett begged, for Mary, in the excitement of the moment, had lifted her veil and pressed her face close to the window of the cab. "I will take you back to your hotel and then make arrangements to effect Miss Linden's rescue this evening. Of course, I shall not attempt it single-handed, as there must be no possibility of a slip up."

"And you will bring her to me as soon as you get her out of there?" the girl asked.

"Indeed I will," the detective promised.

The Syracuse police department was eager to lend its aid in rounding up the criminals.

"What is your plan of action, Mr. Hackett?" the Chief inquired.

"I have noted that there is a double-doored vestibule to the house," the detective told him. "I would have one of your plain clothesmen go up the stoop, ring the bell, and when the second door is opened insert his foot in it. A wave of a handkerchief by a second man stationed at the bottom of the stoop will be the signal for the general rush of men hidden in the shadow of the large tool-box which is being used by the workmen in the factory next-door."

"You will need——?"

"About ten men, as I have no idea of the strength of those within the house, and being familiar with the ground they will naturally have the advantage."

"They will be at your service," the Chief assured him.

The men waited until dark that night, but not until too late to cause a visitor's ring to arouse suspicion. Hackett himself joined the group in the shadow of the tool-box in order to be able to give directions.

The first man ran up the stoop, pushed the bell, and then stepped inside the vestibule. A moment later the outside door closed behind him.

"Was there a signal?" the men asked.

"None at all," the first watcher whispered.

"We won't try to make the attack now," Hackett said. He had arranged with Ryan, the first man, that in case he was unable to give the signal, he was to try to gain the roof, in the guise

of an inspector for the factory owner who was sent to verify the report of the foreman that thieves were making inroads upon the load of building material at night. He now walked around to the side of the building, where he could command a better view of the roof. Within swinging distance of the top of the house was the end of a large derrick.

"Ryan can grab hold of that, and climb down without waiting for the men to force an entrance," Hackett thought, as he watched.

Moments passed with no sign of Ryan. Little by little the detective's fears that all had not gone well within the house began to increase. He hastened back to the men.

"Wait here," he told them. "I think I've found a way to get in without giving the alarm."

At the foot of the derrick he removed his coat and hat, and began to climb. When he reached the top, he swung forward, and jumped to the roof. In doing so he displaced a large stone which he had not been able to see in the darkness. The roof slanted and the stone rolled along until it reached the other edge. Hackett crouched down behind the chimney. He knew that any one on the top floor would be warned of his presence by the thumping of the stone. A moment later the scuttle was pushed cautiously upward, and a head appeared in the opening. The man's back was to the detective, who waited until he had crawled completely out on the roof, and then sprang upon him, and pinned him down. After a little wrestling he laid him out unconscious, quickly stripped off his outer clothes, dressed in them, and crept down the ladder that led from the roof to the top floor. There was no light in the hall or the passageway, and he dared not use his electric flash for fear of revealing himself to anyone who might be passing. In the darkness he miscalculated the last step, and went rolling over in a heap.

"What happened to you, Jim?" came a voice from below.

Hackett did not answer, but ran swiftly to the room, which he had located from the outside, as the one in which Ruth Linden was confined. He called softly "Ruth," and in answer to her "Yes, right here," put his shoulder against the door, and pushed in with all his might. It yielded to his weight, and fell backward. He held out his hand to the girl, who was crouching on the other side, and drew her after him to the foot of the ladder. By this time some men on the floor below had grown suspicious. There was a rush up the stairs, and the detective saw it was useless to try to make the roof. He pushed the girl behind him, and drew his pistol.

"Don't fire, boys," commanded a man whom Hackett at once recognized as Mary's uncle, Edwin Brown. "You can get him without it, and you might hit the girl."

For a moment they hesitated. They did not relish standing there with the enemy's gun drawn, and the order to hold off.

"You might as well surrender," Brown said. "We've got you in our grip, but I'll promise we'll be lenient if you give up without any fuss."

"And what's your idea of leniency," Hackett questioned, stalling for time.

"Oh, we'll just keep you under lock and key for a few days, until we can all make a getaway without the company of the bulls. We'll give you plenty to eat, and it will be a nice little vacation for you."

"And if I do make a fuss, what then?" Hackett questioned, still stalling.

"In that case, young man, the force may be minus one of its bright and shining lights," Brown returned. "We don't absolutely have to have a Yonkers roadside to stage that little scene. The cellar may not be quite so picturesque, but it has the advantage of being troubled by very little traffic."

The detective made no reply, but raising his pistol above the men's heads fired two shots.

"Bad eye," he heard some one jeer, as the foremost in the group rushed at him, and pinned his arms back against the ladder. Two others took hold of the girl, and pushed her ahead of them to the room from which she had just been rescued.

"Well, you've played the hero for the last time," one of his captors sneered, as he fastened the rope about Hackett's hands.

So intent were the men upon the fate of their prisoner that they were unconscious of the sounds on the steps behind them. Suddenly one of the men turned and gazed into the face of a bluecoat stationed directly in back of him.

"The bulls," he warned, and made a movement to rush to the ladder that led to the roof, but a strong hand detained him. The men in the foreground of the group gained the top of the ladder, only to find a pistol staring them in the face.

"I guess they've got us, boys," Brown announced, and the other men followed suit, and allowed themselves to be handcuffed.

"Coming with us?" the man in charge inquired as he freed Hackett.

"No, I'll stay here," the latter replied. "Will you detail one of your men with me? How about Ryan? Did he get out?"

"Tricky little trick they have all right," the inspector announced. "That vestibule is really a gas chamber. The outside door shuts by a push button arrangement from inside, and at the same time the gas is let into the chamber. I suppose when the victim is unconscious they drag him inside, and dispose of him at their pleasure. We forced the doors open, and stumbled over the body of Ryan. One of the men phoned for an ambulance, and is now down on the stoop waiting for its arrival."

CHAPTER NINE

"OUR work will not be complete until we find Hastings, who is really the brains of this band," Hackett told Ruth as they discussed the situation after the men had gone. "I feel that you are the one who will bring about his capture. You must therefore pretend friendship for these men, explain to them that I thought I was rescuing Mary Ashton when I broke into the house, and try in every way to gain their confidence. Perhaps under the guise of wanting to help them you will be able to learn Hastings's address and get in touch with him. If possible he will want to get his share of Brown's money before the latter leaves the country. No news of to-night's happenings can possibly leak out, as we have taken every precaution to observe the greatest secrecy. We will get Brown's signature to a note to meet him here. This accompanied by some word from you ought to have the desired result."

"Will it be necessary for me to remain here any longer?" Ruth questioned, with an involuntary shudder of horror.

"It will be wise," the detective answered. "I don't for a moment believe that we have rounded up the entire gang. If other members return you can ward off suspicion by explaining that the men have taken Mary Ashton to another place of hiding, and that you are here to look after things until they come back. I figure the only way you will be able to get a message to Hastings will be by some one who is ignorant of tonight's capture."

"I hate to remain here longer, but, as you say, my presence may be a great help later on."

"A couple of my men will always be on guard, so you need have no fear of violence," the detective assured her. "And, of course, you will have the freedom of the house. I must go down to headquarters now, to learn the latest developments," he concluded, bidding her good-night.

As he predicted, the honor that exists among thieves kept the men from revealing the whereabouts of Hastings, even on the promise of leniency in their own sentence. They went so far as to deny acquaintance with him.

"She is perfectly safe," Hackett told Mary Ashton, who was sitting up waiting for his phone message.

"Why didn't you bring her to me?" she asked eagerly.

"That couldn't be arranged," he explained.

"Well, can't you take me to her?" she persisted.

"Not at present," he returned. "I will tell you our plans when I see you to-morrow. In the meantime try to get some rest. Your uncle is on his way from New York, in answer to my wire. We don't want to let him find you looking so ill."

"Oh, I just couldn't sleep wondering what was happening. Now I'm anxious to see my double, but I'll be patient until the proper time comes, only I hope it won't be too long. Good-night."

CHAPTER TEN

EARLY the next morning there was a ring at the doorbell of the house in which Ruth Linden was staying, two short rings followed by a long one, a pause, and then two short.

"Evidently one of the gang who has the signal," the officer left in charge of the house announced. "You'd better answer it, Miss Linden. Tell the visitor that you are alone here, and see what news you can get from him."

The girl slipped on a dressing gown, and hastened down to the door. When she opened it, the man standing in the vestibule gave an exclamation of surprise, and then held out his arm, as if to bar her passage.

"Oh, it's all right," Ruth said with a light laugh she was far from feeling. "I'm not the original, just the duplicate. Mr. Brown has a suspicion that Mary Ashton has been traced to this place, and that some effort will be made to rescue her. He has therefore taken her out of the city, and left me here to prove a case of mistaken identity. He expected you this morning, and said that you would take a message to Roger Hastings."

The man looked at her sharply. Hastings had often boasted of his complete domination over the girl and he felt confident that she could be trusted in a matter that concerned her lover's safety.

"Mr. Brown is sure they are on Roger's trail, in connection with the bond theft," she continued anxiously. "He believes they have no direct evidence against him, but fears they may have before the day is out. He wants to warn him to leave the country immediately."

"And you?"

"Of course I will go wherever Roger goes," Ruth replied. "How long will it take you to get a message to him?"

"He will have it within the hour?"

"Then I will get ready to meet him. Have you the code with you? I haven't sent a message in some time, and I do not want to run the risk of making a mistake."

The man removed his necktie, and from a tiny slit in the seam extracted a small piece of paper.

"Here it is," he said, as he handed it to her. "While you're getting the message ready, I'll scout around for something to eat."

This worked in perfectly with Ruth's plans. Hastings had always taken the greatest precaution to keep the code from her, in order that she might not learn the full extent of the dealings with which he was connected. It took some time to figure out the message, but as she surmised, the new visitor was in no hurry to start out on his

errand. When she had written the few lines appointing the time and place of meeting, she made a copy of the code for future reference. As soon as the messenger had departed, the officer left the house to inform Hackett of the plan for trapping Hastings.

Two hours later two heavily veiled women boarded the train for the north. Just as the cars started to pull out, Hackett and Mr. Ashton swung themselves up to the platform, and took their places in the smoker.

That evening when Hastings entered the suite that Ruth had engaged at one of the smaller hotels of Rochester, he showed plainly the result of his hours of nervous anxiety.

"Hello, Ruth," he greeted, trying to assume his former offhand manner. "Did you think I had deserted you at Charleston? Got off to send a wire, and the first thing I knew the train had pulled out and left me. Haven't been able to locate you since. Glad you thought of getting the message to me. Looks as if I'll have to make a quick get-away, and I'd have to leave you behind. Are you ready to move on? Don't think it's safe to stay here even overnight. By the way, didn't Brown make any arrangements to get the money to me, for fixing up that little matter of the will?"

"He gave me a code message. It's in my trunk down at the station," she told him.

"Well, I'll go down, and make reservations on the next train to some Canadian point," he announced. "We can make further plans on the train."

He turned to go. As he did he was confronted by a duplicate of the girl upon whom he had just turned his back.

"My nerves must be going to pieces," he said shakily. again facing Ruth. "I didn't notice that glass there when I came in, and I thought it was——"

"And for once you thought just right, Hastings," Hackett announced, stepping out from the inner room. "We're going to give you a lot more time to think, too, and maybe you'll be able to remember some things we're all more or less anxious to hear about."

"Do you really think the Chief will give me a job at Headquarters, Mr. Hackett?" Ruth Linden inquired a little later.

"I'm quite sure he will—on my recommendation," the detective told her.

"If he doesn't we'll buy you a headquarters all your own, won't we, uncle?" Mary Ashton promised. "And perhaps we'll find a new Chief," she added, with a significant glance in Hackett's direction.

The young detective flushed.

"May I call on you?" he asked, grasping her hand.

She started. There was love and admiration glowing in his eyes and her heart seemed to respond to it. So she smiled and nodded.

"You will be a welcome guest," she whispered softly.

Ruth had seen this little by-play.

"Wedding bells for them some day," she muttered.

And she was a correct prophet.

GAVE PROPERTY UP AT "SPIRITS CALL"

MAKING the astonishing charge that through spiritualistic messages, alleged to come from the late Clara Barton, founder of the American Red Cross, he was induced to turn over $62,000 to Mrs. Mabelle Rawson Hirons, Dr. James B. Hubbell has instituted legal action for the return of his property. The plaintiff was secretary to Miss Barton for thirty years, and the defendant his life-long friend.

In his bill of complaint, filed in the Montgomery Court, at Rockville, Md., Dr. Hubbell asserts that, when Miss Barton died in 1912, he owned real estate valued at $50,000, costly household furniture and a claim for $5,000 against the town of Glen Echo, as well as other property. It was his cherished hope, he said, to establish a memorial for Miss Barton.

Mrs. Hirons, the plaintiff alleges, visited him in May, 1914, and expressed great interest in his project. On this occasion, Dr. Hubbell states, the defendant simulated a trance, during which she pretended to be in communication with the spirit of the deceased founder of the Red Cross.

According to the complaint, Mrs. Hirons alleged that Miss Barton directed her to tell Dr. Hubbell she (the defendant) had come to help carry out his plan, and that he should turn over all his property to her.

Dr. Hubbell, the petition states, was much affected, and, believing that it was possible for departed spirits to communicate with their earthly friends through certain persons known as mediums, conveyed the real estate to Mrs. Hirons, together with $4,500 he had received under Miss Barton's will, $2,000 he borrowed from relatives and $4,100 in Glen Echo bonds, all of which were to be used in furtherance of the Clara Barton memorial.

Sixty days ago, Dr. Hubbell alleges, he heard Mrs. Hirons say to a neighbor that "she had given up all thought of a memorial to Clara Barton, and that she was not worthy of it, or words to that effect."

Dr. Edward C. Peters signed a temporary bill restraining Mrs. Hirons from disposing of any of the property mentioned in the bill.

The Jeweled Pipe Of Persia

By CHARLES F. OURSLER

THERE is a man in vaudeville called Tarot. He can pull green cabbages from a hat, make a red and gilded ball float in the air, and by firing a pistol shot cause a lighted lamp to disappear. He can also escape from handcuffs, leg-irons and strait-jackets. On the bill-posters he is advertised in large red letters as "Tarot, the Magician and Handcuff King."

To many people Tarot is a greater mystery than his magic. No one knows his real name. There have been rumors that he was born to a millionaire's heritage; that his family has a proud name throughout the land, and that some great compelling motive drove him behind the footlights, where he utilized the knowledge of conjuring he had gained as a hobby to earn his bread and beans. Some hinted at a disgraceful youth which had estranged him from his fathers. Others believed Tarot was Tarot because of a shattered romance.

Inspector Dodge had heard these rumors, for on the force men try to find out all that is hidden. But he had not been personally interested. Consequently, he was rather astonished one evening when Tarot called him on the telephone.

"I should like to see you at once," said the magician. "It is a very serious matter. I have information necessary to the police. But you must come to the theatre—I cannot come to you."

Dodge had tried to argue, but Tarot won. The inspector promised to go to the theatre. He was inclined to be angry at himself afterward, for he was suspicious, anyway, of a man who could get out of handcuffs. But he boarded an uptown car, and shortly before ten o'clock he was at the stage-door of the Arcadia Theatre.

The vaudeville was over and a feature motion picture was being shown, so Dodge had no difficulty in reaching Tarot. He was led down a short flight of iron stairs to a large room below stage, around which were many doors, with numbers on them. The stage hand who guided him rapped on Number 7. The door immediately opened.

Standing in the doorway was a small, slender man, with an austere face in which lines of mischief wove an expression of paradox. His peaked brows, his long nose, and his black hair, slightly curled, gave him a Mephistophelean tinge, and his large black eyes were sparkling. He bowed slightly and stood back as the big-bodied detective strode in.

The room was very small. There was a mirror, with a shelf beneath it on which lay strewn the powders and pencils of make-up. In one corner a wardrobe trunk stood, half open. Two chairs completed the furnishings, and their seats were cluttered with bright brass bird-cages, silk handkerchiefs of gay crimsons, yellows and greens, nickled hoops and other queer articles used by the wizard. From one of the chairs Tarot removed the cages and gravely asked Inspector Dodge to be seated.

"Have you ever heard of the pipe of the late Shah of Persia?" he asked abruptly.

"Why, no, I never have," confessed Dodge, taken aback.

"Not remarkable!" commented Tarot, with a glint of sarcasm in his tone. "Well, sir, it is the most wonderful pipe ever fashioned. Among the royal treasures of the Persian palace, it was ranked even higher than the Shah's celebrated sword. It is set with diamonds, rubies and emeralds—studded thick with them—and its value is certainly more than half a million dollars."

"Suppose it is," retorted Dodge in annoyance. "Why should I know anything about that?"

"Because that pipe is no longer in Persia," said Tarot sharply. "It is not ten miles from my hand at this moment. Also because it is going to be stolen to-night."

The little magician turned his back on the detective, and squinted carefully in the glass as he adjust the cravat beneath his soft collar. Inspector Dodge felt his face reddening in embarrassment; the cool assurance with which Tarot spoke was far different from the way in which he was usually told of crimes.

"Why don't you spill the whole works right away?" he exploded savagely. "Who is going to steal the pipe?"

Tarot tugged at his tie, but did not answer. He made the very nicest adjustment of the knot he had tied. put on his coat and a wide-brimmed, dark Fedora. Then he faced the detective.

"The matter is very simple," he said. "The jeweled pipe of the Shah has been purchased by one of the wealthiest magnates of the American tobacco trust. He has a mania for collecting rare pipes. He paid a fabulous sum to get this one, and exposed himself to some danger. Some of the sentimental friends of the late Shah were opposed to having it taken from the country—indeed, I suspect that the proposed visit of the young Shah which was called off about six months ago may not have been unconnected with this incident. However, the man got the pipe. He smuggled it in without a cent of duty; apparently none of the authorities knew that he had it, and yet I know that some of the most desperate jewel thieves of two continents are after it."

Inspector Dodge had no comment to offer, and Tarot continued:

"Eventually, that pipe will be used, I believe, as a trade-mark for a new brand of tobacco. But it has to be carefully guarded, and its new owner has built a special kind of safe in which to keep it. To-night the tobacco magnate will spend in town. One man will be left in the house on guard. The safe will be robbed to-night!"

Inspector Dodge rose hurriedly.

"Let me call headquarters—we'll get on the job quick—where's the phone——" he cried, but Tarot shook his head and smiled.

"No, my fine friend," he said amiably. "I am captain of the expedition. I want no police to be represented. But it must be done my way, or not at all."

Inspector Dodge rose to his full six feet two, and glared down at the face of the little sorcerer.

"What's the matter with you," he cried. "Are you trying to interfere with the law? I'll take you down to headquarters if——"

Tarot laughed.

"If you are not willing to follow me," said the magician, "I shall do nothing. Meanwhile, the pipe will be gone."

Inspector Dodge knew he was beaten, but he still argued. It took five minutes before he surrendered, but by that time he was seated beside Tarot in a taxicab, and they were speeding northward toward the fashionable suburbs.

"Now tell me where we are going?" pleaded Dodge.

"To Pinecrest—the home of S. H. Medrington, the tobacco king," replied Tarot.

"Medrington!" The detective's voice was awed. "That's the guy, eh? Daughter had a love affair—jilted some fellow—going to marry some other——"

"Yes," snarled Tarot. "Please let me think a while."

He turned to gaze out the window, cloaking himself in a mantle of silence, as if deep in communion with unseen spirits. Inspector Dodge left him alone, and they sped on without a word, until the lights of the city were far behind, and they were on the open road.

Suddenly the taxi stopped with a jerk. Tarot threw open the door, and alighting quickly, engaged in a whispered conversation with the chauffeur. He beckoned to the inspector, and they moved across the wind-swept road. Swaying, muttering trees lined the edge darkly, and far back in the masses of vernal shadows the home lights of a solitary mansion gleamed like golden stars. They set off across a field in the opposite direction.

Presently they came to a narrow footpath, down which they turned. The way grew darker with every footstep. Soon they were in total blackness; there was no moon, and only a few stars in the clouded heavens. Abruptly they halted before a massive iron gate that reared itself suddenly out of the gloom.

"This is the rear gate!" whispered Tarot. "Come on!"

With the agility of a monkey, he leaped upward, twining his legs and squirming his way toward the top. A gasp and a scramble and he was on the other side of the gate.

"Come on! You can do it!" he said with a chuckle, and the huge detective was about to risk it, when the gate swung inward on hinges that creaked. Tarot had shot back the bolt. The dazed inspector passed quickly inside.

It seemed to Dodge that Tarot displayed a surprising familiarity with the grounds. Not a moment did he hesitate. Keeping close to a row of dwarfed bushes, he crept along, moving nearer and nearer to a great bulking mass of shadow which gradually revealed itself as a huge mansion. The house showed not a single gleam of light.

Tarot caught the inspector's wrist, and Dodge noticed how steady was his grasp.

"Follow me across that open space quickly," he whispered. "It's the only place we might be seen."

"What in hell have we got to hide for?" complained Dodge. "We're the——"

But an angry gesture silenced him, and he followed. Under the masterfulness of this cool little juggler the detective had become actually submissive. In a moment they stood before a small door.

"This leads down a small corridor," murmured Tarot. "At the end of the corridor we come to the library door. The safe is in the library."

From his pocket the magician drew a key which he fitted into the keyhole. He turned it, and the door opened noiselessly. As they passed inside Dodge noticed again that Tarot seemed perfectly at home. After closing the door carefully he tiptoed down the corridor, waited a moment, and then made a rapid sign to Dodge to halt. Quickly he drew something round and gleaming from his pocket. At the same moment Dodge heard footsteps.

The door at the end of the corridor was flung open and a large man appeared belligerently, a revolver gleaming in his hand. It was the guard. Crouching in the shadows, Dodge wondered if he should call out they were the police, that they came to prevent a crime, that——

To his utter amazement, the big man suddenly crumpled and fell in a heap to the floor.

At the same instant Tarot sprang from the darkness, and kneeling beside him, fastened handcuffs on his wrists, and small but effective legirons on his ankles. To finish the job, he stuffed two handkerchiefs into the mouth of the unconscious guardian of the royal pipe. Then the magician rose to his feet with a satisfied sigh.

"What on earth happened to him?" breathed Dodge.

For answer, the magician held up what seemed to be a round silver ball, with a nozzle.

"When I make my ducks disappear I have to drug them," he explained. "This contains a drug known only to magicians—stronger than chloroform, but not so dangerous. Come on—we've got to hurry!"

They passed into the library, and Tarot carefully closed the door. He told the inspector, who stood uncertain and dubious in the center of the room, to find a seat and keep quiet. And with vague suspicions stirring in his mind, the detective did as he was bidden. But one hand was on his automatic.

Meanwhile, the magician had drawn a flash-torch from his pocket, which he played over the gleaming knob of the safe. Apparently satisfied, he squatted before it, and his small white fingers set the knob whirling

"To a magician," he whispered gleefully, "all locks are toys."

Undoubtedly it seemed so. The tumblers dropped, the knob whirled for only a very few moments. Almost before Dodge was aware what was taking place Tarot had the safe door open.

"Damn you, you're going to rob that safe yourself!" exclaimed Dodge, rising to his feet.

"Shut up!' snapped Tarot, whirling on him. "With that automatic you thought I wasn't watching you've got me any time you want me. Have some sense, and don't make any more noise. You may have spoiled things already. Just trust me—I'm no crook."

Still unsatisfied, the detective remained where he was, watching every move the magician made. The latter turned back to his work, fumbled in the interior of the safe, and then pressed a button. An electric bulb lighted inside.

"Look! The jeweled pipe of Persia!"

There was awed adoration in the voice of the conjurer as he held it aloft. It was a fair, bright thing to look upon—a long-stemmed affair, with a squat bowl, all crusted over with precious stones that glowed like bits of the rainbow. A gasp came involuntarily from the detective.

"Now watch what I do with it," said Tarot.

Placing it carefully on the floor, he drew from his seemingly inexhaustible pockets what appeared to be a number of photographic plates. These he took as he clambered halfway into the safe, and Dodge heard him tinkering and swearing. But a moment later he drew back and seized the pipe.

"You see—I am an honest man," said Tarot, and put the pipe back in the safe. Then he closed the door, and set about locking it with the same combination which, by some means unknown to Dodge, he had opened it.

As Dodge watched him, two mighty arms came out of the darkness behind him. His automatic was knocked from his hand. As he gave a surging swing to free his arms, he found himself pinioned, and in less time than it takes to tell he was handcuffed and a prisoner.

At the same moment Tarot sprang to his feet to meet the onslaught of a fierce man who flung himself upon him. The little magician fought gamely, but he was no match for his assailant. Magician and detective both were prisoners.

"Make a move, and we'll kill both of you," said a voice in a husky whisper. He was the bigger of the two—an immensely powerful man, and his air was authoritative.

Inspector Dodge, his heart beating from the brief but fierce struggle, his brain whirling at the suddenness of the attack, looked on amazed. Tarot had been right then. The thieves were here. They were powerless. Suddenly he had a happy thought.

"Tarot!" he called softly. "Don't give up. To hell with their warnings. You can get out of handcuffs—come on!"

But Tarot only laughed—a bitter, mocking laugh which Dodge did not understand.

"Tarot!" The big man's husky voice was almost beyond control. "You! So!"

He strode up to the little magician and slapped his cheek.

"So you tried to beat me to it," sneered the big man. "I'll attend to you later."

Inspector Dodge watched what followed in astonishment. Kneeling before the safe, the big man apparently had no more difficulty than Tarot in solving its mystery. But when he threw back the door, an oath of raging blasphemy fell from his lips.

"Curse you!" he cried. "You got it!"

From where he stood Inspector Dodge could see clearly into the central compartment. There was a flat piece of velvet on which the pipe had reposed. But the pipe was not there.

Snarling and swearing beneath his breath, the big man tore open one drawer after another, casting aside papers and bags of coins in storming contempt. But the pipe was not found. Balked here, he got up and seized the magician, tearing his shirt open, rifling his pockets, swearing he had hidden the pipe there. All these indignities Tarot endured in silent scorn.

"Unless someone else got it, that pipe is in this room," declared the big man. "I tell you——"

He stopped and listened. Inspector Dodge was listening, too, and he had heard what had alarmed the robber. It was the scrape of a heel far down the corridor. As they harkened, they heard the flapping of a slipper against the flooring.

"John! Run for it!" cried the big man.

With one accord they darted from the room, and raced swiftly and silently down the corridor. As the door swung half shut behind them, Tarot dropped the handcuffs from his hands with an oath and darted to the side of the inspector.

Seizing his wrists, he toiled feverishly over the manacles and got them free.

"Now, quick," he panted. "We've got to run for it!"

A flood of light filled the room. The two men turned and faced the doorway where a white-faced girl, a gleaming revolver in her hand, confronted them. There was a moment of absolute silence.

She was a beautiful girl, slender, with fine delicate features and wonderfully liquid eyes. Her brown hair fell down over her shoulders. She was wrapped in a pink robe that clung about her ankles.

"You coward!" she cried.

Tarot bowed his head, and his teeth bit into his lower lip. On the girl's face the first startled look was gone—there was now only unutterable loathing and scorn.

"Thank God I found you out before it was too late," she cried feelingly. "To think I might have married you—a common thief. Go—get out—and never let me see your face again!"

"Miss Medrington is kind," returned Tarot, with solemn dignity. "It would be only an insult to attempt to explain. But one word is necessary. If you look in the safe, you will not see the precious pipe. But if you turn out the light, you will find it. Good-evening."

She did not speak as they passed out. They nearly stumbled over the prostrate guard in the hallway. Ten minutes later they regained the waiting machine and were started back to the city.

"How in hell did you make that pipe disappear?" demanded the inspector, unable to control his curiosity any longer.

"Very simple," returned Tarot. "I inserted an arrangement of three small mirrors in the centre of the compartment on the principle of the mirror illusion used by every magician. As long as the electric light was left burning in the safe the illusion of an empty compartment was created. As soon as the light goes out the pipe will reappear. It is a common principle of optics known as 'Pepper's Ghost Illusion.'

"For your information," continued Tarot, "that man who overpowered us was my boyhood chum. He knows as much as I do about magic, for it was our boyhood hobby. But as he grew up, unbeknown to me, he began to use his secrets in the pursuit of crime. Before I found that out, he managed to injure me in the eyes of Miss Medrington. She broke off our engagement and is to marry him.'

"Holly jumping juniper craps!" exclaimed Inspector Dodge. "A magical criminal! Say, suppose that guy gets gay with his robberies again—will you be a magician detective and help us?"

Tarot reflected a moment.

"I will help to prevent his crimes, but not to capture him. I will even help him to escape—as I did to-night. I could easily have made them prisoners to-night, if I had so desired."

"Well, why in hell didn't you?" flared Inspector Dodge.

"Their engagement has been announced—she would be disgraced—and I love her too much for that," replied Tarot.

ESKIMOS DISCONCERT VEGETARIANS

VEGETARIANS have asserted that it is impossible for a human being to thrive healthily on an all-meat diet. They have pointed to the Eskimo, who is known to be diminishing in number, and have said that the long practice of meat eating had caused the decay of the race. Stefansson, the Arctic explorer, takes exception to this view, and in support of Stefansson, Burt McConnel, a member of Stefansson's exploring party, writes the following in Physical Culture. Mr. McConnel was himself a vegeterian and a believer in the evil effects of meat until his experience in the Arctic reversed his ideas on the subject.

"While in the Arctic I found that a good deal of what I had learned about vegetarianism and meat-eating and the high death rate among the Eskimos had to be unlearned. I believed, for instance, that a man who lived on meat alone could not be permanently healthy. Later I was to meet and study several white men who had lived in the North for a dozen of fifteen years on a straight meat diet or a 90 per cent. meat diet without having ever had a serious illness. Two men who had done this were Stefansson himself and Storker Storkersen, his navigating officer.

"I found that the change in climate could be accomplished without discomfort, and that the change in diet was to be effected so gradually as to be almost unnoticeable, and that once a person adopts a straight meat diet he does not welcome the return to a civilized diet. After he has been in civilization for a time, also, he is usually glad to go back to the meat diet. Such was the experience of members of the expedition.

"So while the meat-eating Eskimo is, in the primitive state, extraordinarily healthy, with no tooth decay, tuberculosis, constipation, measles, influenza or other contagious diseases to increase the normal death rate, and while he lives to a comparatively advanced age, his brothers in Alaska and the Mackenzie River country, who have come in contact with the white man, adopted his diet, lived in his type of house, contracted his diseases and become victims of his habit of alcoholism, are dying off faster than the American Indian."

Opportunity And Spider Moran

ERNEST H. BARBOUR

CHAPTER ONE

WHEN Mr. Robert Jackson stepped into his handsome motor-car for his usual morning ride to the factory, he did not realize that a crisis was at hand. Trouble had seemed so far away since his invention had made him wealthy that he had practically forgotten that such a thing existed. The past was dead, he told himself—dead as a door nail.

During the first years of Jackson's residence in Mascot City he had been somewhat annoyed by busybodies who wished to know where he had lived previously, and what his former mode of life had been. To the first query Mr. Jackson answered "New York," which happened to be true, but to the second he was rather vague, his answers being more general than explicit.

One Mascot City man with more money than brains even went to the length of hiring private detectives to look up Mr. Jackson's previous record, but inasmuch as the detectives were looking for Robert Jackson and not for a certain "Johnny" Black, they missed the connection, and incidentally a police reward of one thousand dollars. Their final report was to the effect that there were fifty-six Robert Jacksons on Broadway alone; that they were a detective agency, not a dash-blanked directory company; that their client could take his choice of the fifty-six, and that they were his very respectfully. After that, Mascot City ceased speculating and took Mr. Jackson at his face value, which was considerable.

Then one fine spring morning the ten-thirty-seven ambled into the station about forty minutes late, as usual. From the last Pullman a stranger dropped easily to the ground, and glancing furtively about, stepped to the platform. He was tall and supple and his long, lean fingers twitched nervously. His hands were the hands of an artist—small and delicately formed. His mouth was thin-lipped and cruel and his eyes were of a washed-out blue. The station loungers noted his well-fitting clothes and nervous manner, and finally decided that he was some city man taking a short vacation.

They were right in a measure. As a matter of fact, little old New York was getting just a trifle too warm for Mr. Pat Moran, alias "The Spider," alias "Safe-cracking Pat," alias half a dozen other things. A fellow cracksman, whom in the heat of argument Mr. Moran had playfully hit with a club, had been unsportsmanlike enough to allow his skull to be fractured, and was now in the hospital. Mr. Moran, totally disgusted with the brittleness of his friend's head, drifted unostentatiously out of town, bound for Chicago. But train-riding is weary work at the best of times. and Mr. Moran decided to drop off and rest overnight before completing his journey.

He stood looking up the little main street, and his lip curled in a bitter sneer. Then lighting a cigarette, he strolled casually toward a hotel. He passed the City Hall, housed above a stable where two antique horses and a cart upheld the dignity of the fire department; the Court House with the barber shop beneath, and the jail which would have held Mr. Moran for perhaps ten minutes, provided he were first stricken with paralysis. The visitor paused on the curb and whistled in sheer disgust. Then he took out a cent and flipped it into the air.

"Heads I go, tails I stay," he muttered. The coin spun into the sunlight, shimmered for an instant, and dropped swiftly into the gutter.

As Mr. Moran stooped to pick it up, a big red automobile dashed up and stopped a few yards farther down the curb, incidentally splashing about half a pint of mud over the Spider's trousers. That gentleman looked up and commenced to rave wickedly, until catching a glimpse of the occupant, his curses died away and the shifty eyes narrowed to mere slits.

"Now where did I see that guy before?" pondered the Spider. "I'll bet—ah, gee! it couldn't be!"

He edged up to an inoffensive citizen who wore glasses and who was evidently waiting for a car.

"Say, bo," he demanded, "who's the man in the big benzine buggy?"

"The—really, I'm afraid I did not quite catch what you said," responded the other timidly.

"The guy in the autymobeel." explained the Spider impatiently.

"Oh, yes," said the citizen. "That is Mr. Robert Jackson, one of our foremost citizens. Owns that big factory over there."

He pointed to where a tall chimney belched forth heavy black clouds of smoke.

The Spider shook his head rather sadly.

"That ain't the name," he said. "I t'ought maybe he was a friend of mine. Me friend had a finger gone on the left hand, and——"

He paused inquiringly.

"Why, really," the citizen became quite excited, "that is an extraordinary coincidence—most extraordinary. So has Mr. Jackson."

The Spider grinned affably.

"Gee, that's funny, ain't it?" he said. "That certainly is one of them—ex—ex—what you said.

Wouldn't happen to be the ring finger now, would it?"

"By Jove, though, now you mention it I really believe it is," answered the other.

"H'm," said the Spider reflectively. "T'anks. Well, I must be flyin' me kite. Peach of a little town you got here."

He walked across the street and from a point of vantage deliberately studied the unconscious Jackson. Then he threw away his cigarette and with an air of decision turned uptown. A few hours' skillful questioning gave the Spider all the available information regarding Mr. Jackson.

That night in his room at the one hotel, the Spider flung his patent leather shoes into a corner, and taking off his collar, grinned at his reflection in the mirror.

"So this is where he beat it to," he soliloquized. "Well, it ain't much of a place and I don't think living in this one-horse burg would suit me, but I'm sure glad I dropped off, all right. Easy money—easy money!"

Still grinning he crawled into bed.

Jackson was early at his office the next morning. For some reason he felt unusually gay. He whistled snatches of comic opera as he read his mail, and beamed on his stenographer when she came to take dictation.

About ten o'clock his office boy came in, and with the bored manner of an autocrat, informed him that a gentleman wished to see him.

"Show him in," said Jackson, nodding dismissal to the stenographer, and in a few minutes Spider Moran stood before him.

It was, perhaps, characteristic of the Spider that he did not turn his face to Jackson until a quick glance had assured him, not only that they were alone, but that there was no danger of their conversation being overheard. Then he swung suddenly around and the washed-out blue eyes looked into the hazel brown. Despite his self-control the blood receded from Jackson's face, leaving it a dull fishy white. On the Spider's face dawned an evil smile.

"Hello, Johnny," he said.

"Really," said Jackson, falteringly. "You have the advantage of me. And my name doesn't happen to be Johnny."

"Ah, can that stuff," said the Spider, waving an impatient hand. "There's nothin' doin' in the con line, see? Do you mean to tell me you've forgotten your old pal? Gee, it's ten years or more since me an' you went down to Ridgewood to—to—a tea-fight, we'll say, but I knew you right away, even with the whiskers you're wearin'."

Jackson gulped down a big oath.

"Well," growled he at last. "What do you want?"

"Now," remarked the Spider sulkily, "you're talkin'. You know what I want, kid. I'm broke, that's all. I need coin. cash. mazuma. See?"

Jackson shrugged his shoulders.

"Blackmail," he said. "I might have known it. How much?"

The Spider considered, his eyes fixed meditatively on the ceiling.

"Well," he remarked at last, "you seem to be the big noise in this burg, but I don't want to be too hard on you. Let's say five thousand, an' I'll beat it out o' here and forget I knew you. Like that?"

"Better than I expected," acknowledged his victim coolly. "How do you want it?"

The Spider's jaw dropped. Into his heart shot a fierce pang of regret that he had not asked double the price.

"Well," he almost gasped, "gold'll do."

"Or notes, or silver dollars or pennies," sneered Jackson. "Spider, there's nothing doing—got that? Nothing doing!"

The Spider's face flushed a dull red, and his long, nervous fingers played with a button on his coat.

"So there's nothin' doin'," he said slowly. "Nothin' at all doin'. What about that little safe crackin' stunt at Ridgewood when me an' you an' Red McLean got mixed up with the police, eh? Remember the one you smashed on the head—the one that was in the hospital for six months? Like your swell dame at home to know all about that? Like your friends in the four hundred to know they been mixin' in with Johnny Black, the guy the New York and Jersey fly cops has been lookin' for for the last ten years? Ah, come on, cough up, kid, cough up!"

"I know all about it," said Jackson. "And I've been sorry for it, too. But that's all right. I'm not squealing. I admit it's worth five thousand to me to keep it quiet, too. If you were on the level I'd stand for it. But I know your dirty little soul too well, Spider. In a month you'd be back for more."

He paused reflectively.

"And, anyway, who would believe your word against mine? I'm not like the Johnny Black you knew."

"Your finger is," said the Spider.

"And I'll take a chance," continued Jackson. "Why, I'll bet you're wanted now. You don't dare squeal!"

"What about Red McLean?" inquired the Spider mildly. "He ain't wanted. And I can get him in twenty-four hours."

"Get him," said the other briefly. "When he gets here you and he can play seven-up in jail."

"Oh, I guess not," remarked the crook, easily, "You can't have me pinched without gettin' pinched yourself, you know."

"I'll risk that," said Jackson, "and I won't pay a cent; not one red cent, you understand. Furthermore, I'll give you till morning to get out of town. If you're here then I'll notify the police."

"The hell you will," snarled the Spider. "You notify 'em and be damned! I'm goin' to find Red to-night on the wire, an' when he gets here you'll come across or we'll put you through it!"

He walked to the table and picked up his cap, placing it on his head.

"You'd better make up your mind, Johnny," he said. "Me patience ain't what it used to be. An' I got you dead to rights this time."

At the door he paused and came slowly back to the desk.

"Now look here, Johnny," he said pleadingly, "what's the use o' makin' a mutt out o' yourself? Hand over the five thousand and I'll evaporate. I don't want to make no trouble for you. Come on now, for the last time—will you pay?"

"No," replied Jackson emphatically.

"All right," said the Spider airily. "You're the doctor. But think it over, kid, think it over. If you ain't changed your mind by the time Red gets here—curtains for Mr. Jackson. Well, ta-ta, Johnny. I'll tear meself away."

Jackson's head fell forward on his arms as the office door closed with an insolent bang. For some time he remained so, trembling in every limb. Then he lifted his head, and picking up a photograph from his desk, gazed at it long and tenderly.

"He's right, girl," he whispered. "He's got me dead to rights. I've tried so hard; I've got the best wife and the finest kid in the world—and now this comes. Just when I thought it was all forgotten! Who was it that said, 'The evil that men do lives of them'?"

CHAPTER TWO

THE Spider met congenial companions that night. An exciting game of poker in a downtown saloon was marred only by the fact the one gentleman, rightly considering that six aces in one deck of cards might have something to do with his neighbor's run of luck, hit the latter gentleman under the chin with such science and vigor that the apostle of new poker took no interest in the subsequent proceedings.

Mr. Moran played in hard luck. His little store of cash dwindled rapidly, and midnight found him very blue.

Moodily leaning against the bar, the Spider was drinking the beer for which he had given his last nickel, when a little wizened man shuffled up to him and clutched him by the sleeve.

"Say, pal," he remarked in a hoarse whisper, "maybe me lamps is on the fritz an' I got you spotted dead wrong—but ain't this Pat Moran I am talkin' to?"

The Spider looked him over suspiciously.

"Naw!" he said coldly.

"Come off!" said the little man. "I knowed you the minute I clapped me peepers on you. You must be gettin' foxy in your old age. What d'ye think I am? A cop?"

The Spider grinned despite himself.

"Well, you sure don't look it," he confessed.

"Are you Spider Moran or ain't you?" demanded the other. "'Cause if you are we can do business. If you ain't, why, it's my mistake. That's all."

"S'posin' I am?" said the Spider.

"Then you're the man I want," remarked the little man cordially. "How could you use a thousand bones?"

"Fine," said the Spider, with dawning interest. "Do you happen to know——"

"Come over an' sit down an' I'll tell you the story of me life," replied his companion. "Barkeep, set 'em up!"

The Spider followed him to a corner table, and sitting down, closed his hand lovingly around a fresh schooner of beer.

"Me name's Ryan," said the little man by way of introduction. "Shorty Ryan. Me work ain't in the same class as yours, o' courrse, by a long way, but I'm all right on everything but safes. Now, I know a place in this burg where there's two thousand dollars in the safe this minute, in good hard cash. A pal o' mine put me wise, that works for the guy. Me pal says there's a bill comin' due to-morrow an' the guy got the money in to meet it. Me pal says——"

"Aw, nix on the pal," said the Spider impatiently. "What do you think this is—a guessin' contest? Begin at the front end!"

Mr. Ryan began at the beginning. Before he was half through his narative the Spider glanced at the clock and reached for his cap.

"Two o'clock," he said. "Got the tools? An' your canister?"

Ryan cautiously displayed an assortment of tools and a wicked looking revolver.

"Come on, then," said the Spider, and pushing through the swinging doors, they stepped into the ill-lit street.

Through dark and devious ways Ryan led his accomplice, treating him always with the deference of a pupil to his master. Once a policeman stopped them, but Ryan's explanation that he was taking his friend home, being borne out by the apparent drunken helplessness of the Spider, that danger was safely overcome.

At last the two paused before a large stone house surrounded by well-kept gardens and shaded by magestic trees.

"Here's the joint," whispered Ryan. "Come on!"

Swinging over the wall, he dropped noiselessly to the turf and crept towards the long French windows, the Spider gliding silently behind him. Gaining the veranda, they listened for a moment, but all was quiet, and the Spider touched Ryan on the shoulder.

"You stay here an' keep your glims open," he

whispered, "an' I'll get in an' do the trick. Gimme that canister. Now the jimmy!"

A muffled click and the window opened silently inward. Into the room stepped the Spider, his rubber-soled shoes making a soft pat-pat on the hardwood floor. A single flash of his electric lantern showed him the safe in the corner, and in a moment he was at work—deftly, silently, his long flexible fingers moving with extraordinary rapidity. Five minutes passed; ten minutes; quarter of an hour, and suddenly Ryan heard an exultant whisper.

"I got it!" said the Spider gleefully. "It was dead easy!"

Then, without warning, an electric button snapped and the room filled with light. The Spider, swinging around, found himself looking down the barrel of a big revolver, while a pair of steady brown eyes glanced along the sights.

"Well, well," said the man with the gun, "look who's in our yard! Welcome to our city, Spider!"

"Johnny!" gasped the Spider. "Is this your place?"

"I thought so," said Jackson gently, "but perhaps I'm wrong. Hello, what's the matter with your little friend?"

Ryan, with an oath, had dropped from the veranda and was running like a hare.

"Well, it really doesn't matter," said Jackson. "You are the guest of honor, Spider."

"Where's your wife?" asked Moran sulkily.

"My wife's gone to the country," replied Jackson. "Hurrah!" he added as an afterthought.

"Well, I'm caught wit' the goods, all right," said the Spider. "But there's one thing, Johnny; you can't call the cops, can you?"

"I don't intend to," said Jackson. "Just put that money you have of mine back in the safe, will you, please?"

The Spider complied.

"Well, as you don't need me here, an' you can't call the bulls," he said, with a return of all his old confidence, "I'll be goin', Johnny. You certainly got a nice place here."

"Oh, I wouldn't go yet," remarked Jackson, playing with his watch chain. "There's a heap of things I want to say to you. When two old pals meet, as you remarked this morning, there are always things to chat about."

"Cut it out!" replied the Spider briefly. "I'm goin'."

"Sit down," said Jackson. "Sit down!"

The Spider wearily sank into a leather-covered chair.

"About ten years ago," began Jackson, "I was a pretty wild kid, wasn't I, Spider? I'd been brought up in the slums; my mother dead; my father a drunken loafer; my companions men like —like you, for instance. Never had much of a chance to know good from bad, had I? Then you and Red McLean took me out, got me drunk, and —you know the rest. That night my name went down on the 'Wanted' list, and every policeman in New York was looking for me."

The Spider watched him sneeringly.

"Then," continued Jackson, "I ran away. I intended to live the same old life. I knew no other. Then—then I met a girl. You wouldn't understand if I told you how she influenced me—you couldn't. For her sake I lived straight. I learned to see life from a different angle. I even began to see what happiness meant—and I learned to pray. That last was the greatest thing of all, I think. Then I married my little girl. I prospered. We have a child that is all the world to both of us. We were happy.

"To-day you came. The old life had found me out. All my dreams were over. My wife and child disgraced. It was hard luck when I'd tried so hard. To-night I sat in this room and prayed as I had never prayed before that something might come to turn this disgrace from me. Then I heard a noise. My prayer was answered. You came, Spider, with a revolver in your hand to rob my house. Spider," the soft caressing voice lowered a trifle, "do you ever pray?"

"Aw, what the hell are you yappin' about?" sneered the Spider. "Do you think everybody——"

"Spider," this time the voice was harsh. "Do you ever say your prayers?"

Moran had risen. Something had made him uneasy.

"Say, when do I leave here?" he asked. "I want—say I want—Johnny, what's the matter with you? I was only foolin' about the five thousand, honest I was. Johnny, Johnny, don't kill me, Johnny!"

"I don't see why not."

"But you'll hang!" screamed the Spider, crawling at his feet in agony. "They'll hang you like they did Skinny Grogan in the big pen."

"What, for shooting an armed burglar in defence of my own home?" said Jackson. "Guess again, Spider."

Suddenly the Spider, grovelling on the floor, felt something cold and metallic touch his hand. It was his own revolver. He clutched it and sprang to his feet.

"You'll kill me, will you?" he shrieked.

The two shots rang out almost together. Jackson's face streaked red; the Spider, swaying for an instant, dropped across the couch and lay still. Jackson slipped a hand under the Spider's vest and then turned to the telephone.

"Central," he said easily, "give me 2350 James. What's that? Yes, the police station!"

* * * * * * * *

Another stranger, alighting from the train at Mascot City that same morning, casually bought a paper. Seeing the flaring head-line he read it carefully, and whistling softly, took the next train out. Red McLean was a cautious man.

The Doctor From Paris

By CLARA LOUISE DOUGLAS

IN 1919 Fred Marvel was junior partner of the firm of Morley & Marvel, private detectives and inquiry agents, located in Park Row, New York.

His partner was well known, having been for many years previous to his setting up on his own account in the employ of the detective department of the police, and Fred had established a reputation for astuteness and faithfulness that aided not a little in establishing his private detective agency upon a prosperous course.

Besides various other business engagements of a widely diversified character, they were engaged to transact all the detective business of the Marine Bank. It is hardly necessary to say that a financial institution of such magnitude as the bank in question occasionally had work for them to perform.

There were not so many absconding cashiers and dishonest clerks, it is true, but there were plenty of rogues who occasionally caught the people of the great bank napping.

One day in April a note for one hundred thousand dollars was paid at the Marine Bank, and within twenty-four hours thereafter it was discovered that it was a cleverly executed forgery.

The signature of a wealthy hardware merchant had been forged, and Marvel consequently reasoned that the forger was, in all probability, a person familiar alike with the handwriting of the merchant and his business.

As Marvel was walking in the direction of the hostelry he was accosted by a respectably attired woman of middle age, whose general appearance was that of a domestic employee of some sort.

Even before she spoke something in the woman's face struck Marvel as familiar, but as soon as he heard her voice he fully recognized her to be a woman by the name of Jane Beck, who had years previously been employed in his family in the capacity of a nurse to his wife at the time of the birth of his only child.

"I am so very glad that I have met you, Mr. Marvel, for I am in a great deal of mental trouble, and as you are a detective it may be that you can help me," said Jane Beck as Fred shook hands with her.

"If I can assist you in any way, Jane, I shall be glad to do so. Please keep my business a secret, though, for I do not desire to publish the fact."

"I will, sir; and now if you can spare me a few moments we will walk along this deserted side street, and I will tell you the cause of my trouble."

"I am at your service, my good woman," the officer answered, for he knew Jane Beck to possess more than the average share of good sound common sense, and was somewhat curious to hear her story.

"You must know, to begin with, that I am at present employed as a nurse by a lady by the name of Mrs. Foster, in whose service I have been for a long time, and to whom I have become very much attached.

"Mrs. Foster's husband, a gentleman of wealth, died suddenly four months since, and then his widow removed from her country house among the Berkshire hills to the city, and at the earnest request of her only living relative, a doctor by the name of Anthony Buvier, she took up her residence with him."

Jane paused for a moment, and Marvel said to her:

"What is the relationship of the doctor to Mrs. Foster?"

"He is her brother," the woman answered.

"Very well. Proceed with your story."

"A week ago Mrs. Foster was delivered of a male child at the residence of her brother, and at the time the lady was alone in the house with the physician, her brother. She was unconscious from the effects of an anesthetic, and when I returned to the house she informed me her brother assured her that her child was born dead.

"At this statement a strange suspicion came to my mind, but it was so horrible that it made me shudder to think of it.

"When I returned to Dr. Buvier's house, in making my way to Mrs. Foster's room I was obliged to pass the door of the physician's laboratory, and I distinctly heard the wailing of an infant. The sound proceeded from beyond the door, and I could swear that a new-born child was then in that laboratory.

"I listened for a moment, and distinctly heard the sound of voices, one of which was the physician's and the other was a woman's voice, and one that I had never heard before.

"When Mrs. Foster had told me of the birth of her child the doctor came into the room, and Mrs. Foster then asked to see it.

"The child was brought in.

"I looked at it closely, and I am almost sure that the dead infant was several days old. You know I am a professional nurse, and my judgment should count for something.

"Although I suspected that all was not right, I held my peace and did not communicate my sus-

picions to Mrs. Foster, or indeed to any one else.

"The dead infant was removed, and next day its remains were consigned to the family vault of Dr. Buvier.

"But a short time after my return to the doctor's house, and perhaps half an hour after, I heard the cry of an infant proceeding from the physician's laboratory. I saw a woman muffled in a Scotch plaid leave that room by a side door, which opened directly upon a path leading to the street.

"There was that in the manner of the woman that clearly betrayed the fact that she wished to avoid observation.

"After this, strange as it may seem, Mrs. Foster. who was a woman in robust health, did not recover, and yet her brother was reputed to be a remarkably skillful physician, and she constantly took his medicines.

"One day the doctor was called to visit a patient in a distant city, and as he was absent nearly a week rs. Foster failed to take his medicines for several days, as the supply he had left her had all been used.

"From the time she discontinued taking her brother's prescriptions until she resumed them again when he returned Mrs. Foster improved very fast.

"I now was forced to suspect poison."

Again Jane Beck paused.

The detective was now deeply interested in her story, and fancied that there might be a devilish plot back of all this.

"Can you tell me why Dr. Buvier may desire to poison his sister?" asked Marvel.

"Not unless, as he is her only relative and will inherit her fortune, it is the desire to gain possession of Mrs. Foster's wealth that prompts him," replied Jane Beck.

"A sufficient motive," said the detective.

"What shall I do? Will you help me save Mrs. Foster?" cried the woman, in a voice trembling with emotion.

"I will, Jane. I give you my word I will. But I must leave you now, although I will find a way to communicate with you again at any time I may desire to do so. Meanwhile see that Mrs. Foster takes no more of Dr. Buvier's prescriptions, but do not inform her of the cause of this precaution," said the officer.

Then he parted with the faithful woman.

That same evening he called at Dr. Buvier's office, for he wished to see what manner of man he had to deal with.

The officer presented himself as a patient, and was soon introduced to the doctor, whose office was in his own house, an ancient structure to which numerous modern additions had been attached.

Dr. Buvier was a man well advanced in years, rather slender, slightly stooped-shouldered, and his hair and eyes were black, as was also his full beard, save where it, and indeed his hair as well, was streaked with silver.

Upon his head he wore a close-fitting black silk skull-cap, that sat upon the apex of his skull.

A long flowered dressing-gown, reaching almost to his heels, concealed his person.

Marvel convinced himself in the course of a few moments' conversation that the doctor was a Frenchman, as his name had led one to suppose.

Having obtained his prescription for an imaginary ailment and paid his fee, Marvel left his office fully satisfied that he had an exceedingly crafty and subtile personage to deal with.

The officer had acquired the power of pretty accurately judging character from the face, and had considerable confidence in his convictions.

Inquiries very cunningly made developed the fact that the doctor bore an excellent reputation both professionally and as a private gentleman.

Still Marvel clung to his conviction that he was a wolf in sheep's clothing—the most dangerous of all.

Several days elapsed, and the detective had not neglected the forgery case. He had quietly worked in his own way, but thus far found himself completely at fault; not the slightest clue did he succeed in obtaining of the forger.

Marvel was baffled, and began to think that the unknown criminal who had perpetrated the forgery must be a person possessed of unusual astuteness and subtlety.

The officer was seated in the office of a hotel one day, when Dr. Buvier entered.

His business, of trivial nature, was with the owner; and when he removed the silk hat—for it was a sultry day—Fred was surprised to see that he still wore under his hat the small, tight, silk cap that covered the top of his skull, and which he had noticed when he called at his office as a patient.

When the doctor took his departure the hotel clerk carelessly remarked:

"It's very funny, but nobody ever saw that little black skull-cap off the doctor's head, even in the warmest weather. It is one of his eccentricities, it seems."

Next morning a telegram summoned Marvel to town, as he had to appear as witness at the trial of a notorious criminal whom his men had brought back from abroad.

He had, however, by no means abandoned his intention of detecting the forger, and was equally determined to protect Mrs. Foster from her unnatural brother.

The day following the trial, as I was examining some documents pertaining to another case, Fred came upon the following letter, which bore a date ten years previous, and was addressed to the Wall street office of the New York detective service in care of Marvel's partner.

This is a copy of the letter:

"Department of Justice,
"Office of the Prefecture of Police,
"Paris, June —, 1919.

"GENTLEMEN—Look out for one Henri Devour, aged forty-five years, of a slender form, slightly stooped, and having black hair and eyes. He is bald on the top of the head, and when last seen was cleanly shaven—wearing no beard—and he was attired in a plain black suit. The man was an attache of the Nazarine Hospital, and is an assassin. The crime for which he is wanted is the murder of a widow in the Rue St. Helene. The woman was rich, and supposed to be a female miser. She was reputed to keep in her house a large sum of money, and this report was the cause of her death. Her assassin, however, only secured twenty thousand francs, the balance being secreted where he failed to discover it. The murdered woman was brave, and battled for her life. In the struggle with her assassin she struck him upon his bald head with a hatchet, inflicting a severe wound, from which the blood was seen streaming by the one person who witnessed the assassin's departure from the house of his victim.

"This wound will leave a scar which the assassin will carry to the day of his death, and may assist in his detection.

"Should you secure this man, hold him as a fugitive from justice and wire me at once.

"(Signed) M. CLAUDE.
"Prefect of Police."

The reading of this letter suddenly sent a strange and startling suspicion flashing through Marvel's mind.

This suspicion prompted his immediate return to his office.

As soon as he arrived there he sent a note to Jane Beck, appointing a meeting at the corner of the street where he had encountered her at the time of his previous visit to the city.

That same evening, promptly to the moment, at the appointed time the woman met Marvel at the place of rendezvous.

The first thing she said added to his suspicions.

"Mr. Marvel, I have now to inform you that since Mrs. Foster has been an inmate of her brother's house, some documents representing valuable securities have been taken from her trunk by some party unknown," said Jane Beck.

"Ah, well, for your satisfaction, Jane, I will tell you that I fancy I shall be able to recover those documents and render it impossible for Dr. Buvier to compass the death of his sister," replied the detective.

Then, leaving Jane, he instructed her to proceed to the doctor's house and procure a specimen of his handwriting.

The officer then returned to the house and decided upon a plan of action which would establish or completely disprove his suspicions. An hour later Jane Beck placed a letter written by the crafty doctor in his hands.

Marvel at once compared it with the signature of the forged note, subjecting both to a powerful microscope, and he was something of an expert in this line; he soon convinced himself that in Dr. Buvier he had found the forger of whom he was in search.

Next he visited a medical friend, and after consulting with him concluded to have the body of the reputed infant of Mrs. Foster examined. The family vault was secretly opened and his medical friend examined the remains, and at once said that the infant had been born alive, and that it was at least four or five days of age at the time of its death from some natural cause.

Marvel's object now was to identify the woman with the plaid shawl whom Jane Beck saw leave the doctor's house the day Mrs. Foster's child was born.

It required two days to strike the unknown woman's trail, but at last Marvel accomplished the work, and learned that the woman had resided with her sister in a cottage near Dr. Buvier's until within a few days after the birth of Mrs. Foster's child. Further he learned that the sister of the woman who wore the Scotch plaid had become the mother of a male child four days previous to the birth of Mrs. Foster's offspring, and that Dr. Buvier had attended her in his professional capacity.

But now the woman who wore the plaid and her sister had disappeared, and no one knew whither they had gone.

The officer did all in his power to locate them, as he considered it of great importance to do so, but in vain.

They had skilfully covered their trail, and Marvel suspected that one most astute and cunning had planned to accomplish this result.

He was shadowing the doctor's house every night now, and one evening just at sunset, and while it was yet light, he had crept to the window of his private apartment, which he had just seen him enter.

The shrubbery concealed Marvel from the observation of any one outside of the room, and as he peered through the window, he saw the doctor writing at a table.

Suddenly he said aloud:

"I have forgotten the woman's address."

Then he arose and went to the wall, upon which he pressed, and at once a small secret door, the entrance of which one would never have suspected, flew open.

The doctor drew from this niche in the wall a small box, and returned with it to the table.

From the box he took a letter, and after examining it he directed an envelope.

This done, he replaced the letter in the box, and rising from the table with the box in his hand, he

crossed to the secret door in the wall, while Marvel still peered in at the window.

A moment later he left the room, and Marvel crept through the window, opened the secret door, and examined the box, finding in it the securities taken from Mrs. Foster, and a letter signed Mary Clews, and postmarked Carnley Village.

Mary Clews also confessed that the dead baby wore the plaid shawl; and with the securities in his possession Marvel drove across the country to see Mary Clews that very night.

He found her, and in her possession she had a male infant, which the detective frightened her into confessing was the child of Mrs. Foster, which the doctor had placed in her care, paying her well to keep the secret.

Mary Clews also confessed that the dead baby which had been buried as Mrs. Foster's son was her sister's child, which had died a natural death.

The officer brought Mary Clews and Mrs. Foster's infant son with him, and leaving them at the hotel called upon the doctor. He was alone in his office, and walking up close to him, Marvel suddenly snatched the little skullcap from his head, and a terrible scar was disclosed upon the bald spot thus revealed.

"I arrest you for the murder of a woman in the Rue St. Helene ten years ago, Henri Devour!" cried the detective, at the same time presenting a cocked revolver.

The guilty man sank, trembling, upon the floor, and was quickly handcuffed.

He confessed that he had intended to poison his sister, and that her child he purposed to cast adrift as a foundling.

The man also confessed to the forgery and the murder.

Mrs. Foster's infant was restored to his delighted mother, who soon recovered her health.

The unnatural brother became insane while in prison, and died a raving maniac before his trial came on.

GIANTS, ANCIENT AND MODERN

WHEN Johann Van Albert stepped from the gangplank on a recent arrival of the *Mauretania*, he had the distinction of being the tallest man who ever entered the United States. His 8 feet 5 inches of height required that a special berth, made up of two cots placed end to end in a large companionway, be furnished for the trip from his home in Amsterdam, Holland.

Since Johann has left his quiet home out among the near-by windmills of Amsterdam, and intends to enter the show business over here, it will be interesting to dig up some giant history and see how he compares with previous competitors who used to be great attractions. Probably no living giant in the United States ever exceeded the 8 feet attained by the late Captain Bates, who was a native of Kentucky.

The word "living" is used here because of the fact that for some time during the year 1869 the famous Cardiff giant led many people to believe that a 10-foot man had once lived and was buried near Cardiff, a village in Onondaga County, New York. The story of this monstrous fraud perpetrated on the American public makes such unusual and interesting reading that it will bear repeating.

The idea had its inception out in Fort Dodge, Ia., when an adventurous fakir purchased a huge block of gypsum from a quarryman of that place. The block then was shipped to Chicago, it being taken in charge by a sculptor, who chiseled it into a 10-foot giant. The surface was pricked with needles to give it the appearance of pores in the human skin, and then treated with a variety of acids which made the entire statue appear of ancient origin. After completion, the giant was securely packed in an iron box and shipped to Union, N. Y., where the owner claimed it, loaded the bulky box upon a large wagon and hauled it fifty miles to a farm near Cardiff. The giant form was then removed from the box and secretly buried, remaining under the ground nearly a year, until it was "accidentally" discovered by some workmen who had been engaged to dig a well by the promoter of the fraud.

This great discovery was made on October 16, 1869, and news of the wonderful petrified giant spread all over the country. The lucky finders covered it with a tent and put it on exhibition, while special trains were run from New York City and other near-by points so that the clamoring multitudes could see the astonishing remains at the earliest opportunity.

Until the deception was discovered it is estimated that more than 50,000 persons jostled each other in order to view the wonder, paying a dollar apiece for the remarkable privilege.

But, passing on from this greatest hoax, it is found that Captain Bates was the tallest of our modern American giants, although his 8-foot height was slightly exceeded by that of Anna Swan, a native of Nova Scotia. Going further back into giant history, we find that Queen Elizabeth's head porter was 7 feet 6 inches high, probably being given this exalted position on account of his ability to see what was going on at all times.

Among royalty itself it is claimed that one of the Roman emperors was nearly 9 feet high, but the measurements of those days may have allowed him considerable more height than he would be entitled to at this time, though no doubt he was a person of great stature for history to make note of the fact.—N. Y. Tribune.

The Meaning of Dreams

HOW TO READ CHARACTER

(*Continued from No. 74*)

A good sight is enjoyed by those persons who have generally black, thick, straight eyelashes, large, bushy eyebrows, concave eyes, contracted, as it were, inwards.

Short-sighted people have a stern, earnest look, small, short eyebrows, large pupils and prominent eyes.

Sense of hearing; those who possess the same in perfection have ears well furnished with gristle, well channeled and hairy.

The sense of smelling is most perfect in those who have large noses, descending very near the mouth, neither too moist nor too dry.

A nice faculty of tasting is peculiar to such as have a spongy, porous, soft tongue, well moistened with saliva, yet not too moist.

Delicacy in the touch belongs to those who have a soft skin, sensible nerves and nervous sinews, moderately warm and dry.

Irascibility is accompanied by an erect posture, a clear skin, a solemn voice, open nostrils, moist temples, displaying superficial veins, thick neck, equal use of both hands, quick pace, bloodshot eyes, large, unequal, ill-ranged eyes and choleric disposition.

Timorousness resides where we find a concave neck, pale color, weak-winking eyes, soft hair, smooth, plump breast, shrill, tremulous voice, small mouth, thin lips, broad, thin hands and small, shambling feet.

Melancholy is denoted by a wrinkled countenance, dejected eyes, meeting eyebrows, slow pace, fixed look and deliberate respiration.

An amorous disposition may be known by a fair, slender face, a redundancy of hair, rough temples, broad forehead, moist, shining eyes, wide nostrils, narrow shoulders, hairy hands and arms, well shaped legs.

Gayety attends a serene, open forehead, rosy, agreeable countenance. a sweet musical tone of voice, an agile body and soft flesh.

Envy appears with a wrinkled forehead, frowning, dejected and squinting look, a pale, melancholy countenance and a dry, rough skin.

Intrepidity often resides in a small body, with red, curled hair, ruddy countenance, frowning eyebrows, arched and meeting, eyes blue and yellowish, large mouth and red lines in the hand.

Gentleness and complacency may be distinguished by a soft and moist palm, frequency of shutting the eyes, soft movement, slow speech, soft, straight and light-colored hair.

Bashfulness may be discovered by moist eyes, never wide open, eyebrows frequently lowered, blushing cheeks, moderate pace, slow and submissive speech, bent body and glowing ears of a purple hue.

Strength of mind is signified by light, curled hair, a small body, shining eyes, but a little depressed, a grave, intense face, bushy beard, large, broad back and shoulders.

Pride stands confessed with arched eyebrows, a large, prominent mouth, a broad chest, slow pace, erected h ad, shrugging shoulders and staring eyes.

Luxury dwells with a ruddy or pale complexion, downy temples, bald pate, little eyes, thick neck, corpulent body, large nose, thin eyebrows, and hand covered with a kind of down.

Loquacity may be expected from a bushy beard, broad fingers, pointed tongue, eyes of a ruddy hue, a large, prominent upper lip, and a sharp, pointed nose.

Perseverance may be dreaded when we perceive a high forehead, firm, short, thick, immovable neck, quick speech, immoderate laughter, fiery eyes, and short, fleshy hands and fingers.

Impudence may be inferred from fiery, staring eyes, eager look, circular forehead, round, ruddy countenance, elevated chest, a flat nose, and loud laughter, etc.

As connected with this part of our subject, we subjoin the following Rules:

RULES TO KNOW THE TEMPER AND DISPOSITION OF EVERY ONE

The Signs of a Choleric Disposition are

1. The habit of the body hot in touch, dry, lean, hard, and hairy.
2. The color of the face yellow.
3. A natural dryness of the mouth and tongue.
4. The thirst great and frequent.
5. Activity and inquietude of the body.
6. The pulse hard, swift, and often beating.
7. The spittle bitter.
8. The dreams are most of yellow things, of brawls, of fights, and quarrels.

The Signs of a Sanguine Constitution are

1. The habit of the body hot in touch, fleshy, soft, and hairy.
2. The color of the body fresh, sanguine, and lively.
3. A natural and constant blush in the face.
4. The pulse soft, moist, and full.
5. The sweetness of the spittle.
6. Dreams most commonly of red things, of beauty, feasting, dancing, music, and all jovial and pleasing recreations.
7. A continual habit of pleasantness and affability.
8. Often affected with jests, mirth, and laughter.

(*To be continued*)

Current News

X-RAYS AND THE SHOE

A leading New York store has recently installed an ingenious X-ray outfit which permits its patrons to see just how their feet fit in any pair of shoes. In fact, at a glance, the patrons can note the position of the bones in their feet in any given pair of shoes, and in that manner determine whether they are trying the proper last or not.

A PETTICOAT HIS DEATH-BED PILLOW

A unique desire expressed in the will of one Charles Holt Bracebridge Bakewell Allen of Wylen street, Honor Oak road, S. E., was quoted in the Daily Chronicle of London recently. According to that newspaper, the testator desired to be buried in his Medical Staff Corps uniform, with his regimental service medals attached. He also directed "that a small parcel containing the pink flannel half-petticoat in which the late ——— (a lady named) died may be placed, if feasible, beneath his head in his coffin."

BURIED ALIVE

To prevent premature burial, the Japanese Diet proposes, according to the Kobe Herald, to prolong the interval between death and burial to 70 hours.

Dr. Matushita, a Tokio physician, advocating the delay, said that the husband of a woman who had been buried 24 hours after her apparent death married within a week of the funeral service, and the woman's indignant mother had the family grave opened to remove her daughter's body to her own graveyard. She was amazed to find that her daughter had been buried alive.

NEW DISCOVERY IN PALESTINE

Some Jewish workmen, building a government road near Tiberias, Sea of Galilee, have unearthed remnants of ancient walls and columns.

The government immediately stopped the work and Mr. McKay, Director of the Department of Antiquities, visited the spot with two members of the Jewish Exploration Society. There is reason to believe that the site of the ancient Tiberias, which played such a great role in Jewish and Christian history, is on the point of discovery. Permission has been granted to the Jewish Exploration Society to undertake immediate digging in the locality.

TREE DUG FROM ASPHALT PIT

A cypress tree, exhumed from a small asphalt pit in southern California, says Popular Science, has lately been identified by the curator of a Los Angeles museum as a relic of the Pleistocene or Glacial Age. As such it was contemporary with the mastodon, the sabre tooth tiger and the giant ground sloth. The find is considered the more remarkable because no living specimens of the cypress are to be found in the vicinity. The tree is in an excellent state of preservation, too, thanks to the action of the enveloping tar. The bark is intact in many spots, and is unchanged except for the discoloration incident to long contact with the bituminous matter of the pit. The tree lacks its roots and smaller branches, but two of the larger are still to be seen.

WEAK-MINDED SPIRITS SUGGEST SUICIDE

It would seem that there are not only good spirits and evil spirits hovering about us, but that there are also weak-minded spirits. These, it appears, are well meaning souls that often work injury to us. The New York Medical Journal remarks: "These discarnate spirits believe it is sad sometimes that human souls must tarry in this world when everything is against them. They long to have them enjoy the larger, freer life. If one of these spirits becomes attuned to a weak or diseased mind, it may suggest suicide, but purely from a desire to help. Suicides are generally deemed irresponsible. This theory confirms it; but one reluctantly admits the invading of our borderland by weak-minded spirits. Devils and angels we know, but how are we to discern these others?"

RELICS OF HUMANS IN BRITAIN CENTURIES AGO

During September discoveries of great interest to archaeologists were made on the Island of Risga, in Loch Sunart, Argyleshire, Scotland, where a band of scientists had been searching in huge shell mounds.

The director of the party is of the opinion that the discoveries made in this rocky and uninhabited island have gone far to settle the dispute among archaeologists as to whether a break intervened in the human occupation of the British Isles between the Paleolithic and Neolithic periods. He says:

"Vestiges of human activity extremely like the 'Azilian,' as the intermediate period is called in France, have now been recognized in Scotland in the Island of Oransay, adjoining Colonsay, and the name of Oransay has been given to this period in Scotland."

The Risga excavations disclosed remains of the Oransay man's dwelling places, with his food, refuse, and rude tools, made of flint, jasper, quartz and quartzite, horn and bone, and many large implements made from the antlers of the red deer.

AN ICE CAVE

Two to three feet of ice throughout the cave for its entire length of about one-quarter of a mile was found by Frank E. Spofford, Assistant Supervisor of Surveys, as a result of the investigation he was ordered to make by the Commissioner of the General Land Office of the cave located about twenty-five miles east of Dubois, Fremont County, Idaho.

Mr. Spofford describes the cave as being about thirty feet wide over its whole depth, with a varying height of roof of from five to twenty-five feet. He penetrated its full length and found a great unevenness of the base, evidently caused by falling rocks from the roof.

The country in which the cave occurs is a series of lava beds and the cave is lava formation. There are no stalactites or stalagmites and Mr. Spofford suggests that the ice formations are due to seepage water that has frozen. Ice is present all year. Settlers in the region are taking ice and water from the cave for domestic use.

NEW CHECKERS CHAMPION IN AMERICA

J. F. Herr, of Buffalo, N. Y., is the new American checker champion. He succeeded to the title—held until his death last February by the late Hugh Henderson of Pittsburgh—in the American Checker Association's fourth annual major tournament just concluded at Cedar Point, a Lake Erie shore summer resort near Sandusky, Ohio.

Herr gained the tournament final by defeating Alfred Jordan of Los Angeles, Cal., former British champion, who had been picked by 90 per cent. of the experts attracted by the Cedar Point meet to win the American title.

The New Yorker and the Californian played twenty-one games, each of which resulted in a draw before in the twenty-second the former gained an advantage that netted him his win. The two were opposed fourteen hours and twenty minutes.

In the final Herr disposed of J. P. Bradford of Cleveland, high man of the opposing group, in easy fashion.

PRIMITIVE INDIANS KNEW SURGERY

That the Indians at the time of the discovery of America had made considerable advances in surgery and medicine will be surprising to most readers. Yet Dean W. R. Harris of Toronto, who has studied the habits and customs of the Canadian Indians, in his new book, "Cross Bearers of the Saguenay," writes:

"They were acquainted with the benefits of muscular relaxation in dislocations of the limbs and knew how to replace a displaced joint. When suffering from frostbite they applied a resinous plaster. They knew how to make and apply splints to a broken arm or leg and to inject astringents into wounds.

"They understood the importance of drawing blood in fevers and inflammations, employing in the operation flint knives. They began the cure of most of their acute maladies by bleeding, purging and sweating.

"For ordinary colds they believed that a moderate fast was best for the patient. Anise was eaten to expel gases from the stomach. The buckeye nut and its leaves, boiled, was taken as a remedy for diarrhoea. In cases of colic they chewed the hulls of black walnuts. For fevers of a low type they gave the bark of the dogwood tree."

PREHISTORIC MOSQUITOES IN AMBER

Nearby States have long suffered the opprobrium of producing large crops of vicious mosquitoes, but happily that notoriety is diminishing through the use of modern methods for their extermination. If the improvement continues there is ground for believing that it will be necessary to visit a museum to find out what the insects look like.

There are specimens still to be found, however, and some were recently discovered in a very unusual manner. In New York, on the most famous street in the world, is a curio shop where among other strange things sold as souvenirs are small pieces of amber cut into squares and rectangles of different thickness and suggesting diminutive blocks of brown sugar.

The odd feature about these little pieces of amber is that each one contains an insect, preserved in the amber and so nicely displayed that it is almost uncanny to see them delicately poised in the glassy, translucent material.

Every one knows in a general way that amber is a rosin found in the ground of various localities bordering the Baltic Sea. Perhaps it is not so well known that its origin was similar to the gum that exudes from cherry trees; but amber belongs to a bygone age and the trees that produced it disappeared long ago. The vegetable origin is proved by its being found with coal, or fossil wood, and also by the insects found in it.

In some of the specimens insects with wings and legs separated from the bodies would seem to indicate their struggles to free themselves from the then viscous fluid. As more gum exuded the insects would become completely encased, and as such gums are aromatic and therefore preservative against decay, trees, gum and insects have become buried in the earth by convulsions of nature and fossilized in time by geological processes. The specimens of prehistoric mosquitoes thus preserved bear a striking resemblance to those of to-day.

Amber was known to the ancients, who early discovered its electrical properties; in fact, they named it electron, whence our word electricity.

"FLU" EXPERIMENTS ON MONKEYS

Devotes of the theory that man is a remote descendant of the ape family will seize with avidity upon the scientific conclusions of medical authorities that monkeys, like folks, are susceptible to the attacks of influenza. Under the direction of Major F. G. Blake and Major R. L. Cecil, the Army Medical School of Washington, D. C., recently completed tests with 22 monkeys to determine the effects of influenza on the ape.

The monkeys were inoculated with B. influenze by swabbing the upper respiratory tract with a culture of the disease germ isolated from a case of influenzal pneumonia which had developed in a man. The virulence of the disease was subsequently raised. The period of incubation embraced from three to six hours.

The experiments indicated that influenza exercised the same influence on monkeys as on the human family with respect to its behavior, symtoms, complications and pathology. The medical directors described the action as "an acute self-limited respiratory disease identical with influenza in man." Similar results were obtained when pursuing a different method of inculation, intratracheally, with the exception that one monkey evidenced no signs of infection.

INGENIOUS JAILBREAKERS

Prisoners who recently made their escape from Marion County Jail, Indiana, by soaking the bars of their cells with formaldehyde disinfectant to destroy the temper and make filing possible showed amazing ingenuity, but a prisoner in a California prison surpassed them in resourcefulness.

The man, who was serving a life sentence, was employed in the garden. Obtaining a piece of sacking, he laid it in a corner, soaked it and sowed oats on it. When these had grown a few inches high he hid himself under the sacking and crawled slowly away through a field of oats. The keepers were utterly at a loss, and if someone had not happened to think of placing a bloodhound on the trail the prisoner would undoubtedly have got away.

At Dartmoor, England, the windows are protected by stout iron bars. On one occasion one bar of a cell was found to be filed almost through. The occupant of the cell was brought before the warden and questioned as to how he got the file and where he had hidden it. He refused to answer, and was promptly relegated to another cell. A few days later a bar of this cell was found to be cut, yet the most thorough search failed to reveal the file. The prisoner merely smiled at all questions. Thereupon he was removed to a top cell and kept there. When his release was due the warden asked him, in a friendly way, if he would now solve the mystery. The man laughed, and putting his fingers into his mouth, produced a small watchmaker's file with a loop of thread attached. The man kept the file suspended in his throat by the thread to a tooth.

Another escape at Dartmoor was marked by great ingenuity. A prisoner employed in the kitchen had to rise early in the morning to get breakfast under way.

One foggy winter morning he vanished. It was an hour before he was missed, and then a rope was found hanging down on the outside of the tall stone wall surrounding the prison yard. It was held in place by a bagful of earth.

The bag was the prisoner's pillow case. The rope was made of his blanket. He had carried these down under his clothes, filled the bag with earth from the nearest flower bed, flung the bag with the rope attached over the wall. And the rest was easy.

Sacks were employed also by another prisoner, who almost escaped from Portland Prison. He managed to make for himself a suit of flour bags. Attired in these, he waited for a baker's cart which he knew would draw up in the prison yard at a certain hour The moment the baker went into the prison the convict jumped into the cart and drove off. He reached the next town before the police, summoned by telephone, caught him.

FACTS ABOUT LODESTONES

Strange stories have been told about the lodestone, and there are many persons who firmly believe that it confers attractive qualities upon those who wear it. A lodestone is, of course, only a piece of magnetic iron ore.

Eugene S. Todd, writing of lodestones in the Electrical Experimenter, says he knows a famous actress who refuses to go on the stage without a lodestone somewhere about her. She says it makes her more magnetic and that she controls her audience with more ease, thus receiving more applause, which incidentally increases her salary.

There is an old saying in Sweden (where the lodestone is found), "Wear a lodestone over your heart and it will insure your heart's desire; place it under your pillow at night and your dreams will come true."

Mr. Todd recalls the tale of the "lodestone mountains" in the Arabian Nights. A vessel was drawn toward it until when quite near all the spikes and nails were drawn from the ship and she fell apart—a total wreck, all the metal (iron or steel) parts of the ship flying toward the mountains and the ship itself sinking to the bottom.

In Sweden (the most powerful lodestones came from Sweden), they tell how hunters have been unable to pick their guns from the ground, after laying them down near lodestones. They also tell of cases where the person's shoes had to be removed, owing to the nails in their soles, which held them fast.

LORE OF BLAZED TREES AN AID TO HISTORIANS

In earlier days, when large portions of the country were covered with forests and there were few roads, travel was often possible only by way of paths "blazed" through the woods. To blaze, as every woodsman knows, is to strike off a chip from the sides of trees, so that the line of marks shall indicate the direction of the trail.

In blazing for a path small trees were marked, but in blazing for the bounds of a lot or town or for a farm line larger trees were usually selected, the blaze being made about breast high. When, however, as was often the case, the blazing was done in winter on deep snow by men traveling on snowshoes, the mark was necessarily higher up. When such a line is traveled in the summer, especially after some years, during which the trees have grown, the marks are sometimes found high up on the trunks and are likely to escape the eye of the inexperienced. As many of them will also be partially overgrown the task of the surveyor who goes over one of these old lines is not always easy.

If the boundary line passes to the left of a tree selected for blazing the cut is made upon the right side. If the line goes to the right the tree is blazed upon the left side.

In running a boundary at a corner, where two lines come together, either a "monument" is erected—a stake supported by four boulders—or a tree is blazed on all four sides to indicate as nearly as possible the turning point of the line.

The permanency of the record made by blazing trees is quite remarkable. It is a matter of fact that in many cases of disputed lines or boundaries of lots in forest lands the courts have held the record of the blazes as sufficient and reliable, where carefully drawn plans and formally attested title deeds have been set aside. The wound of a blazed tree heals over, but never so completely that the scar may not be readily recognized by the experienced woodsman; hence it follows that so long as the blazed tree escapes fire and the axe of the lumberman so long it remains a faithful record of the line as surveyed.

Blazed trees also fix dates almost as accurately as they preserve boundaries.

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36 "Trailed by a French Detective," by Rene Renaud.
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38 "The Ten Doctors," by Allan Arnold Fox.
39 "The Stain on Page 61," by Chas. T. Jordan.
40 "A Masked Mystery," by Police Sergeant Kelly.
41 "The Black Soul," by Beulah Poynter.
42 "Sanctuary," by William Hamilton Osborne.
43 "The Mystery of the Seven Shadows," by Charles F. Oursler.
44 "The Sign of the Dragon," by C. Martin Eddy, Jr.
45 "The Magic of Detective Woo Fang," by Frank F. Whitfield.
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48 "When the Clock Struck 13," by Dr. Harry Enton.
49 "A Piece of Blotting Paper," by Dorothy Weber.
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FOOTBALL IN TURKEY

It has always been a difficult matter to be a sportsman in Turkey. One Turk, Rechad Bey, tried it with a result weird enough to serve as a basis for a detective story.

It appears that the young Turk had organized a football team among his friends, together with some Greeks and Armenians, and began practising. Shortly thereafter, in the middle of the night, police came to his house and carried him off to Scutari. There he was submitted to a long examination as to the club and the game of football.

A special messenger was sent for the ball, and that was duly examined and found to be an infernal machine. The rules of the game were considered to be another piece of damning evidence.

After long deliberation the culprit was sent to the higher police authorities in Stamboul, who went through a second long examination and came to the conclusion that the empire had been saved from disintegration by the early discovery of a great plot.

After much careful thought and examination of the evidence of the crime it was decided that there might be nothing in it, but that it must not be committed again.

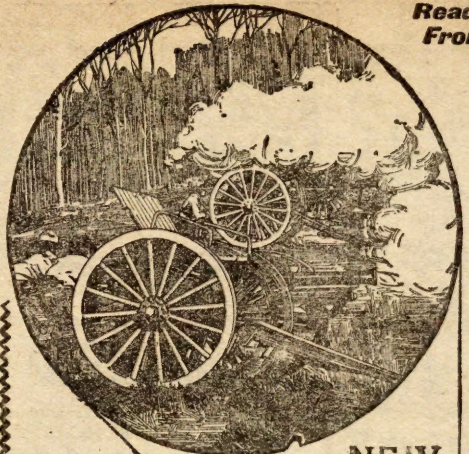
WORKING BOYS IN JAPAN

Working boys in the United States, safeguarded by child labor laws and health regulations, fare much better than the young boys of the working classes in Japan, according to W. B. Norton, a church worker, who has just returned from the Far East. Tokio, the "university city, presents one of the striking contrasts, with its 50,000 college and university students and its burden - bearing boys," he said.

"In no country we have visited did we see so much boy power used in pulling loads as in Japan. While the situation is somewhat similar in China and Korea, in Japan it impresses one more because the boys are small of stature; and also because it seems so incongruous in a nation laying such emphasis upon public schools."

Many of these boys work from 4 o'clock in the morning until 10 o'clock at night, Mr. Norton said, and the employers are, under the Japanese compulsory education law, technically "teaching the boys a trade."

To help offset this injustice, the Baptist Tabernacle in Tokio maintains a series of night schools for working boys and girls, two-hour sessions being held.



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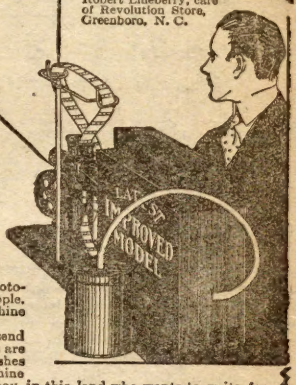
I am slow about turning in my thanks to you, but my Moving Picture Machine is all right. I have had it a long time and it has not been broken yet. I have seen a $12.00 Machine but would not swap mine for it. Robert Lineberry, care of Revolution Store, Greensboro, N. C.



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